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ABSTRACT

French immersion programs were initiated in Ontario and Quebec 20 years ago in the search for more effective second language instruction methods, and by September 1975 had spread to all Canadian provinces. The emphasis is on communication, with subject matter taught in French. The programs have been very effective, resulting in successful second-language learning, maintenance and improvement of native language skills, and consistent academic achievement. Canadian immersion education has some unique characteristics: it enrolls native English-speakers and not French-speakers; teachers are bilingual; and it is available to, but not required of, all English-speaking children. Several program design options are common: early or late, and total or partial immersion. Finland, also a bilingual country, shares some characteristics with Canada, but while early partial immersion is possible in Finland, early total immersion is not feasible. Late immersion could pose serious administrative problems in Finland, where there are often several language groups, and beginning large-scale content instruction in a foreign language at the upper levels would be problematic; some content courses however could be taught in the second language. A few carefully-planned experimental programs in specific bilingual communities in Finland could be developed, but broad-based adaptation of the Canadian model is unlikely at present. (MSE)

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION

A Study of the French Immersion Program in Canada Considering the Possibilities of Adaption to Finnish Schools

1. INTRODUCTION

I have grown up in a unilingual Finnish environment, but I have also spent periods in a bilingual community. At the age of four I attended a Swedish kindergarten in Borås, Sweden. My parents were the only people who spoke Finnish to me at that time. The second experience came much later: I moved to Canada with my family in the spring of 1977. Our Finnish friends seemed worried about the linguistic development of our three children, who at that time were two, five, and six years of age. Would they ever learn Finnish properly? What happens if they don't learn to read and write in their mother tongue first? On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean the attitude was completely reversed. Our neighbours were just excited. How wonderful it would be for the children to learn to speak English, and probably even some French, in addition to Finnish. "Children pick up languages so easily", they used to say. The situation was seen as a great opportunity. That is when I became truly interested in bilingualism. Why was it experienced in such different ways? Was it a threat or an opportunity?

For my children it turned out to be a great opportunity. When my eldest daughter started grade 1 in Canada she neither spoke nor understood any English. By Christmas time she knew what was going on in school, and by the end of the spring term she understood everything but spoke very little. In grade 2 she was presented an award for leading her class in spelling, and she skipped grade 3 altogether. According to the

teacher, she was her "best student" in grade 5 when we left Canada for Finland. During our stay in Canada she practiced reading and writing Finnish at home. We also taught her mathematics and read her — because of the vocabulary — all Finnish school material studied at her grade level in the Finnish comprehensive-school system. My second daughter joined a bilingual French–English kindergarten group at the age of five, and learned very quickly to say "du lait" to get her milk during the lunch break. Neither of them seemed worried about the fact that they did not understand what the teacher — or anybody else — was saying. They just listened carefully and did what the others were doing.

The two-year-old was the only one who seemed disturbed by the fact that he did not understand what was going on. When addressed, he answered a very strong "NO" and made sure he was the one who hit first. He learned English in the backyard before starting school, however. It seems to me that the experience has widened the perspectives of our children. They know that, to many questions, there is no simple "yes" or "no" answer. They also know that languages are not only dry and theoretical school subjects, and they seem to learn French and Swedish very easily.

This study has its origin in my fascinating four-year experience of the easy interplay between English and French in the town of Shediac, New Brunswick, Canada. I feel convinced that bilingualism — and bilingual education — need not be a mysterious and strange process.

11. Objectives of the Study

French immersion was introduced in Canada as an experimental form of bilingual education for English-speaking children. They attend English schools, but receive part of their education through French in order to become thoroughly proficient in their second language, French. These programs have also been referred to as "home-school language switch". The first objective of this study is to find out how the French immersion program works in Canada. This gives rise to many questions. What is the program like? What are the objectives of this type of bilingual education in Canada? Why was it introduced in the first place? An important and interesting point is the experience which Canadians have received from this type of education.

Seemingly, at least, Canada and Finland present some similarities linguistically. Both of them are countries with a long bilingual tradition, with one language group in the minority. The second objective of this study is to examine the possibilities of introducing bilingual classes into Finnish schools following the Canadian model. This type of program obviously requires outstanding individual teaching, financial resources, solid support by school authorities and parents, as well as motivated pupils. Would it be possible to find in Finland the conditions needed for success? After all, could there be something basically very different about the Canadian and Finnish linguistic environments? In order to give more light to these questions, I shall also discuss the present bilingual schools in Finland.

12. Definitions

The terms "bilingual", "bilingualism", and "bilingual education" evoke such different thoughts in readers' minds that they require closer definition. Bilingual has been used as a cover term for people with a number of different language skills without specifying how much the speaker has to know, or how different two idioms have to be to qualify as languages.[1] This is a very broad categorization. For the present purpose bilingualism needs to be divided into different types. These types can be called "limited bilingualism", "partial bilingualism", and "proficient bilingualism".[2] Limited bilingualism is the lowest of these three levels, and only indicates a low level of language skill in both languages. Partial bilingualism indicates that the person in question has attained a native-like level in one of the languages, but has achieved less than native-like skills in the other language. Proficient bilingualism is the highest of these categories: a level of bilingualism at which the individual has attained native-like proficiency in the full range of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing skills in both languages. Bilingualism, as used here, refers to proficiency in two languages. It can also be defined as "balanced bilingualism".[3]

There are also different types of bilingual education. If the second language is a national language, like French in Canada, the objective of bilingual education is to develop native-like skills in the second language by having that language used as a major medium of instruction. The

second category covers the situation of ethnic minorities. The purpose of bilingual education, in this case, is to give the children a better start in school and also to protect their culture and language, like Spanish in the United States. There is also the case of the developing countries, where the home language is taught, either with or without a written code, and the international language is introduced for purposes of higher education. Examples of this can be found in Africa. In this study bilingual education is defined as schooling provided fully or partly in a second language with the purpose of making the pupils proficient in the second language and, at the same time, maintaining and developing their proficiency in their first language.

13. Limits of the Study

The growing interest in bilingual education in many countries has created numerous experimental projects and a vast amount of literature. Here, bilingual education is seen from a narrow perspective, in accordance with the objectives of the study. "Bilingual education in Canada" covers the immersion projects where French is the learners' second language. No other bilingual projects are included. Likewise, immersion education in Finland would be seen as Swedish–Finnish bilingual education, the Finnish learning Swedish as their second language. Consequently, bilingual education is seen as an alternative approach to teaching a second language.

Furthermore, the focus is on bilingual programs from kindergarten through grade 9. Some high schools and colleges provide bilingual programs as well, but they can rather be defined as maintenance courses. Their purpose is to maitain and further develop the students' previous language skills.

2. THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM IN CANADA

There are French immersion classes in Canadian schools, but no Swedish immersion classes in Finnish schools. Why has this particular type of schooling been introduced in Canada? What is the program like?

21. Background

211. The Linguistic Outlines of Canada

The British and the French are the founding peoples of Canada. The first permanent French settlement was established in 1605 in Acadia, the present Nova Scotia. Later, when expelled from Nova Scotia, these Acadians moved on into what is today known as New Brunswick, or to Prince Edward Island. This laid the foundation to the Acadian population of Canada. The Acadians have developed a colonial culture of their own, and they speak a different variety of French. The habitation of Quebec was founded a few years later, in 1608, and these settlements were quickly followed by the first British settlement in Newfoundland in 1610.[4] So there are two varieties of French spoken in Canada: Acadian French, spoken along the east coast in the provinces of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick, and Canadian French with its center in the province of Quebec.[5] Today Quebec remains the center of French-speaking Canada. Outside Quebec and the Atlantic provinces, major French-speaking population can be found in Ontario and Manitoba. In the remaining areas the French account for less than three per cent of the total population. In fact, census figures show that the anglophone population of Quebec is larger in percentage terms than any francophone population outside Quebec with the exception of New Brunswick. The following figures, based on the 1981 census data, show the population of Canada by mother tongue:[6]

	English	French
Quebec	11.0	82.4
New Brunswick	65.1	33.6
Ontario	77.4	5.5
Prince Edward Island	93.9	5.0
Manitoba	71.7	5.1
Nova Scotia	93.6	4.3
Saskatchewan	79.6	2.6
Northwest Territories	54.1	2.7
Alberta	80.9	2.8
Yukon	87.4	2.5
British Columbia	82.0	1.7
Newfoundland	98.7	0.5
Canada	61.3	25.7

At the same time, the total population of Canada was 24,343,180. The rest of the population consists of the native peoples, Eskimos and Indians, as well as of immigrants from all parts of the world.

In spite of the fact that Canada has been a bilingual country since its establishment in 1867, a lively language debate has been going on until very recently. The language situation appears even more confusing because of the two levels of administration: federal and provincial. The Official Languages Act of 1969 states that, as far as federal institutions are concerned, English and French are the official languages of Canada with equal status and equal rights.[7] The Official Languages Act of New Brunswick came into effect in 1977, recognizing that English and French are the two official languages of the province and are equal in status, with the same rights and privileges; this made New Brunswick the first province to become officially bilingual.[8] The same year, Quebec decided to become unilingual French adopting Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language.[9] Further progress in the field of bilingualism was made when the public service of Canada became bilingual in 1978.[10] Finally in 1982, the language rights enacted in the Official Languages Act were entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of the Constitution Act.[11] The guarantee is now written into the Constitution that English and French have equal status as the nation's official languages in all institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada. The Constitution Act also guarantees minority language educational rights; Canadian citizens of the English and French-speaking minorities in each province have the right to have their children educated in their own language, provided there are enough children eligible for minority language education in an area. These constitutional language rights give a new challenge to bilingual education in Canada.

212. Why Was It Introduced?

The need to keep the country together was no doubt one of the most important underlying factors of promoting bilingualism in Canada. The French and the English have always lived side by side; even bilingual education is nothing new, but that used to mean teaching English to the

French. The Quiet Revolution in Quebec between 1960 and 1970 was a renaissance of the French language, accompanied by a new national consciousness and pride. Claims were made for Quebec to be recognized as a national state.[12] At this point it should be recalled that even the provincial civil service of Quebec used English as the language of work during the 19th century; the public utilities of Quebec became bilingual only after a vigorous campaign in 1910.[13]

Separatism is not a phenomenon confined to Quebec only. The French outside Quebec have also organized themselves. The Fédération des Franchophones Hors Quebec is one of the pressure groups. Their message is simple, "We are a vanishing people." They plan to stop assimilation and progress to full development of their language and culture, to equal partners in society.[14] The Parti Acadien has as its goal a separate province for the Acadian people.[15]

Faced with the deepening crisis of French–Canadian aspirations, and of anglophone reluctance to consider major changes of policy, the government appointed in 1963 a Roayl Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to study the sources of the crisis and to suggest solutions. The interim report in 1965 declared that Canada was passing through the greatest crisis in its history. The Commission discovered that not a single French Canadian who talked to them was happy with his present situation in Canada. They felt that, instead of being equal partners in a country, they were an underprivileged minority.[16]

Many anglophones took the warning seriously. The recommendations of the Royal Commission called for full recognition of French and English as the official languages of Canada at the federal level as well as in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick. The recommendations also called upon the provinces to establish bilingual districts to provide teaching in the minority language wherever that minority reached 10 per cent of the district's population.[17]

All these developments made many anglophones realize the importance of the French language in Canada. According to the Weekend Poll, conducted in 1977, almost one-half of French Canadians, 47 per cent, regarded themselves as bilingual. Only 17 per cent of the English were bilingual. Nearly three-quarters of the English, 73 per cent, turned out to be almost or completely unilingual compared with 39 per cent of the

French. The poll was based on 922 telephone interviews in 31 of the country's largest urban centres.[18] Many English Canadians began to see that their children must learn French to be able to compete with the French for jobs in bilingual areas. The question was not only political or ideological, it was also economic.

There was traditional language teaching in Canadian schools, but many felt that it was not enough. Pupils did not become fluent in French, and many felt inhibited about speaking it. A teacher's comment gives light to the problem:

> "I taught French for fifteen years in the high schools of Montreal and could not see that the average youngster was making any sort of progress as far as actually being able to communicate in the language. If I am interviewing a youngster and I ask, 'Are you able to speak French?' and he says, 'Yes. I have high school French,' I just put down, 'Unable to speak French'."[19]

Dissatisfaction with the results of traditional methods led to innovation.

213. How Was It Started?

The French immersion program was started with several individual pilot projects, in most cases initiated by parents' groups.

The Toronto French School

The Toronto French School is one of the pioneers of bilingual education in Canada. It started on the initiative of a concerned parent, W.H. Giles, as an immersion program for a group of six neighbourhood children in his recreation room. Mr. Giles was convinced that attempts should be made to teach languages at a young age, and that the children should be given adequate opportunity to use the language in true communication. The school was officially opened in 1962, and English-speaking children were boldly immersed in French from kindergarten upwards. It was found

necessary to conduct a survey on bilingual programs elsewhere. Since then, numerous experiments on the effect of different approaches to bilingual education — immersion for half days and full immersion — have been made, with the objective of creating native-like proficiency in English and French for all pupils.[20]

The St. Lambert Experiment

The history of the St. Lambert Experiment shows how a small group of parents was able to make a radical change in the curriculum of a conservative public school system.[20] In 1963, a group of parents of St. Lambert, a Montreal suburban community, met to discuss the language teaching situation in the local school system. The parents felt that their children should have the opportunity to become bilingual within the school system, since it was difficult to achieve the skill outside of school. At that time St. Lambert was approximately 50 per cent French, 50 per cent English. Some protestant parents had already put their children in French Catholic schools, or even in the academically weaker French Protestant classes, to give them a chance to become fluent in the second language. So they had already crossed the linguistic and cultural line, and did not find home-school language switch threatening.

In 1965, the School Board agreed to set up an experimental kindergarten group, not so much through a conviction of their own, but because of the heavy pressure on them by the parents' group. In the meantime the parents had contacted several specialists in the field for support. They also followed up the program, because they wanted to make sure that it would not fail due to lack of support from school authorities. The School Board members raised a series of objections to continuing the experiment; some were of practical nature like books and teachers, others emotional. Nevertheless, in 1966 the Board agreed to carry on the experiment into grade 1 and to open up two additional kindergarten classes. The School Board never accepted the experiment for more than a year at a time. By 1970, however, the French immersion program in St. Lambert Elementary School covered kindergarten through grade 5. (See Appendix 1: Finnish and Canadian School Systems)

The experimental project started with full French immersion at the kindergarten and grade 1 levels: all instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic was given in French. English language arts were introduced in grade 2, and the amount of instruction through English was then gradually increased.

The Ottawa Separate School Board

The Ottawa Separate School Board started a pilot project in 1969 by establishing half-day kindergarten classes for English-speaking children. Before this, the School Board had appointed a committee to study and establish the educational facilities which would ensure that all pupils would have the opportunity of learning both French and English. The committee examined several bilingual programs elsewhere, reviewed studies, and invited experts from the educational field. The program was based on this intensive study. The French kindergarten was optional, and it was offered in twenty-eight schools. The new program proved very popular: where the option was offered, over 90 per cent of the pupils attended French kindergarten classes when they first started. The following year approximately 95 per cent of the eligible children were taking advantage of the option. At the grade 1 level the parents had the option of choosing total immersion, a seventy-five-minute daily program, or no French at all.[22]

The Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal

In 1969, the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal decided to set up a French immersion program for grade 7 pupils, in which they would receive all instruction in French except one daily period of English.[23] This program was not meant for all children; those qualified had to be above average in all subjects including French. In addition, the pupils and parents were expected to be well motivated. The idea was to expand the project if it worked out with bright pupils. Introducing French immersion at this level created an obvious problem: Were you teaching French, the

subject content, or were you trying to combine them? It was decided to teach both, but the books were chosen according to the level of interest and not at the pupils' level of vocabulary. Hay describes this type of bilingual class as follows:

> "The problem to begin with was that of silence. An 'immersion school' for the first few months is painfully silent. The reason, of course, is that the students are listening. You are almost obliged to have the *cours magistral*, where the teacher teaches and the students listen, because initially the students do not have enough vocabulary to participate very much. After six to eight weeks most students understand enough to know what is going on most of the time. After the first term there is no one left who has major problems in comprehension. They understand what is going on, they participate more in lessons: they speak, they use the language."[24]

An advantage of the Montreal experiment was that they had nothing but immersion French in the school. They were able to insist on French in the corridors and in the cafeteria, too.

The Peel County Experiment

The Peel County Board of Education used a slightly different approach to organizing its experiment in bilingual education. In 1970, a committee was established to study the approaches used elsewhere, but none of them seemed suitable for Peel County, Ontario. There was an oral French program in grades 7 and 8, but no French teachers were available below that level. Neither was there any significant French presence in Peel County to enable the children to practice what they had learned. So the Board did not feel motivated to organize an immersion program at the kindergarten level or in the early grades. There was considerable doubt concerning the impact of second language learning on young children, there were the extra costs involved in introducing specialist teachers, and there was the possibility that the children would forget their French not having an opportunity to use it. Instead, it was decided to introduce a French immersion experiment at the grade 8 level for a group of bright pupils. It was

felt that this approach would result in a satisfactory level of fluency in French without the risk of harmful effects on the pupils. The program was not affected by budget considerations and could be introduced in all parts of the county, if successful. There was the disadvantage that the pupils who were left outside the experiment would have to rely on a minimal program. The second disadvantage was related to the difficulty in obtaining an accent-free French, but this was not considered to be of major importance.[25]

The English-speaking parents and educators who have requested the establishment of immersion classes or schools have been convinced of the benefits of bilingual education, they have believed that this would be the best way to learn the second language; there was the example of bilingual schools in Europe and intensive immersion courses for adults. In spite of this, a lot of study and research has been connected with these projects from the very beginning. An example of this is the creation of the Bilingual Education Project of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 1970.[26] It was prompted by the concerns of Ontario educators and parents' groups who were looking for answers to their problems concerning bilingual education. It was designed to work in cooperation with the Department of Education, boards of education, and individual schools in the planning, execution, and evaluation of bilingual projects. The purpose of the project was not so much to promote bilingualism but to study and discuss all aspects of it.

The best-known pilot projects have been initiated either in Quebec or in Ontario. In Quebec, it was the time of the Quiet Revolution, and there was the threat of French becoming the only official language of the province. Because of French population everywhere in the province, it was easy for the pupils to practice their French skills. Quebec offered a very natural surrouding for bilingual education. Ontario is much more English, but it is still one of the provinces with a major French-speaking population, and Quebec is right across the border. The popularity of French immersion kindergarten classes in Ottawa is not surprising bearing in mind that Ottawa is the administrative center of Canada, and that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism included full recognition of French and English as the official languages

at the federal level. In addition to this, the French-speaking Hull is situated on the opposite side of the Ottawa River, being in practice part of Ottawa.

Both in Quebec and in Ontario, parents and school authorities experienced a need to learn French in the 1960s and early 1970s. The traditional programs were not effective, and there was a desire to learn French easily; Canadians were not accustomed to the hard work involved in learning a foreign language. Several school boards started bilingual experiments in response to parental pressure and the new challenges created by the renaissance of the French language in Canada. The St. Lambert Experiment would probably not have been initiated without a parents' group with a strong conviction. In Canada this is possible, because individual school districts are relatively free to make their own decisions.

It must be remembered, however, that there were also those who felt sceptical and concerned about this movement toward French immersion programs. They realized the extreme complexity of second-language acquisition and its implication in the total educational picture. They also pointed to the financial problems caused by the acquisition of teaching materials, and doubted whether it would be possible to find enough qualified teachers.

22. Description of the System

221. The Objectives of Bilingual Education in Canada

The first French immersion classes began as a result of pressure from parents who were concerned about the low level of French achieved by children in traditional French-as-a-second-language programs in a community which was emphasizing the importance of French as a language of work. The principal objective of immersion education is to meet the children's needs: to make them bilingual. Stanutz defines the level of bilingualism in the following way:

> "The aim of the immersion program is to develop bilingual persons — that is, individuals who have attained such a level of bilingualism that:

a) they can meet with ease all day-to-day needs of intercommunication;
b) they can accept professional training in either language;
c) they can live in either speech community and adjust to it without any special linguistic or cultural difficulty."[27]

School District No. 15, Moncton, New Brunswick, expresses the same idea as follows:

> "The aim of the Early & Late Immersion programs is the development of bilingual persons; that is, individuals who are able to speak with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Those students who successfully complete these options should be described as 'bilingual'."[28]

In other respects, the parents wanted a normal education for their children, without endangering their ability to communicate in English or hindering their general educational progress. Immersion education has also secondary objectives: familiarizing the pupils with French-Canadian culture and creating understanding between the two ethnolinguistic groups.

222. The Characteristics of French Immersion

All Canadian French immersion programs have many characteristics in common. The underlying principle is to teach the second language much in the same way as children learn their mother tongue: through intensive exposure to and use of French in real communicative situations. The teaching method is to teach about the subject content using the second language; accordingly, the initial focus is to develop comprehension skills. The main emphasis is on meaningful communication and not on grammar rules.

Immersion programs have spread across Canada pressured by parents' groups. The parents have been involved in program initiation and implementation, which indicates that they are actively interested in their children's education. In addition, they have a positive attitude toward

learning French; those who prefer traditional education can enroll their children in a regular English program. Immersion programs are optional — there is always the choice between mother tongue education or bilingual education.[29]

An important feature is that the children typically enter the program with the same level of French skills: none at the primary level and some French as a traditional second language later. So they start on an equal footing. In some communities French children are not systematically excluded, however. This may be because there are no French schools in the community or else the parents feel that their children have a better opportunity to become bilingual in an English school.[30] One more benefit is that the teachers are bilingual and understand what the children say, which guarantees meaningful communication. They may pretend that they are not; children respond faster to a teacher who speaks only French, because they do not waste time waiting for her to speak English.[31]

English-speaking children who learn French in an immersion class are part of the dominant, majority group in Canada. They have a lot of opportunity to use English in their wider environment; learning French is no threat to the maintenance of their mother tongue or to their sense of identity. In addition, English is always incorporated into the curriculum: both English and French are used as languages of instruction. The children do not learn French at the expense of their mother tongue.

Second Language plus Content Subject

There is another general approach to second-language teaching, closely related to immersion education, which is worth mentioning here: traditional second-language programs complemented by the use of the second language to teach a selected content subject. For example, there have been programs in Quebec in which the children studied French language arts during their early years of schooling, and continued later by studying geography through French, as well.[32] It is hoped that the pupils following this program will develop a higher level of proficiency than those in a traditional program. One problem with this type of education is no doubt the intensive exposure which is needed to develop a good listening-comprehension skill in the target language:

"On the basis of what I have seen in the total immersion classes I have grave doubts about starting to do one subject at various grade levels in French. I would insist it took two or three months before the students could really understand most of what was going on in our school."[33]

223. The Types of French Immersion

French immersion programs were initiated in Ontario and Quebec, but they have spread across Canada, from communities with significant portions of French speakers to unilingual English communities. By September 1975 the program covered all Canadian provinces.[34] Educators have been faced with the problem of choosing the right type of program for the children in their community, that is, a program in which both English and French are used as languages of instruction.

Immersion programs have many aspects in common, but there are also many differences. These differences include such factors as the grade level at which the immersion program begins, the total amount of time used for instruction through English and French, and the stage in the program when English language arts are introduced. Parents and educators are sometimes worried about the conflicting evidence on the desirability of introducing a second language at a young age. There are arguments which indicate that early bilingualism is very successful; others insist on the stabilization of the primary language before introducing another one. This has led to the development of different types of immersion programs in Canada: early and late immersion, either of which may be total or partial. The early total immersion approach involves the exclusive use of French as the medium of instruction at the early grade levels and in kindergarten, if available; kindergarten is not part of the educational system in all Canadian provinces. English language arts are introduced in grade 2, 3 or 4. Later in the curriculum English is also used to teach selected content subjects — such as social studies or science — so that by the late elementary years the program becomes truly bilingual with lessons devoted to French language arts, English language arts, content subjects taught through French, and content subjects taught through English.

The Ottawa Board of Education and the Carleton Board of Education are examples of a total immersion program in kindergarten and grade 1. In grade 2 English language arts were introduced for approximately one hour per day in most immersion classes, although some classes began English language arts in grade 3 only. The grade 3 and 4 programs continued with one hour of English language arts; French, mathematics science, social studies, art, music, and physical education were taught through French. This resulted in a ratio of 80 per cent French to 20 per cent English. In some classes in the Carleton Board art and music were taught either in French or in English depending on the availability of teachers. In grade 5, however, there was a difference: the Ottawa Board continued with 80 per cent French and 20 per cent English, whereas the Carleton Board changed to a 65 per cent French and 35 per cent English program, with mathematics also taught in English.[35]

The desire to take advantage of the young child's ability to learn a second language combined with the concern for his mother tongue development has led to early immersion classes in which part of the instruction is given in English. The Elgin County Board of Education has introduced a partial immersion program with half a day in French and the other half in English. The children started in a regular English kindergarten, followed by the bilingual program in grade 1. The subjects taught in French in grades 1 and 2 were mathematics, music, and French language arts, with French reading and composition starting from the latter part of grade 2. In grades 3 to 6 science was also among the subjects taught in French, as well as physical education, if possible.[36]

Late Immersion

The late immersion pattern involves instruction of French as a second language for at least a year before the immersion program. The basic aim of the program is to increase the pupils' fluency and their confidence in their ability to communicate in French. Late immersion does not typically start before grade 6, 7 or 8.

In 1973, the Ottawa Board of Education established experimental total late immersion classes at the grade 6 level. The immersion situation was

created by teaching all subjects in French, even English language arts were deleted for the year. At the beginning great emphasis was placed on language skills; more subject content was added gradually. In grades 7 and 8 the pupils continued in a bilingual class studying one-half of the school day in French. In addition to French, the subjects taught through French were history, geography, and one more subject at the discretion of the principal. The remaining subjects were taught in English.[37]

The Peel County Board of Education started its pilot project with a partial immersion program at the grade 8 level, as described earlier in this study (See page 109). The immersion program was preceded by one year of formal instruction in French — twenty minutes daily, intensified to sixty-minute periods for the last two months. At the grade 8 level approximately 70 per cent was taught in French, however. The subjects taught in French were French language arts, mathematics, history, geography, science, and art. The remaining subjects — English language arts, physical education, home economics or industrial arts, and music — were taught in English. In grade 9 approximately 40 per cent of the curriculum was still taught in French and 60 per cent in English.[38]

23. A Case Study: The New Brunswick School District No. 15

School boards across Canada have implemented a most varied selection of French immersion programs in order to promote French language skills — in a way they feel is the best solution in their particular circumstances. In the Province of New Brunswick, which is officially bilingual, French immersion has become part of the established second language program; the New Brunswick Department of Education has developed province-wide guidelines for French immersion.[39] The Policy Statement recognizes two levels of intake for an immersion program:

> *Early Immersion,* in which pupils begin their instruction in grade 1;
> *Late Immersion,* in which pupils begin their instruction in grade 7.

The programs are available for those pupils who wish to acquire a high degree of proficiency in their second official language, but who are not initially able to function in it.

School boards are required to implement an immersion program if there is sufficient interest to ensure that immersion classes are of comparable size to other classes in the district at the level in question. School boards shall implement an immersion program at one of the two entrance levels should such classes be possible. Boards may also implement immersion programs at both entrance levels, depending on the size of the district and the adequacy of resources. Planning for the introduction of an immersion program is seen as an important activity for educational, organizational, and budget purposes. School boards should develop a communication system with the parents of children in school or about to enter school regarding their interest in immersion. As a general rule, one year's planning time is recommended before the implementation of an immersion program.

The Policy Statement also gives instructional guidelines:

> "The initial phase of an Early or Late Immersion Program will be characterized by a concentrated infusion of instruction in the second language. This will enable students to function in all curricular areas early in the Program."
>
> The second phase of an Early or Late Immersion Program will be characterized by the gradual increase of instruction in the first official language while keeping the instructional time in the second official language at a sufficient level to maintain and to enhance the language acquired."[40]

Immersion classes are to be funded within regular school board budgets, but in addition, the Department of Education provides supplementary support to school districts for immersion programs. As immersion programs become integrated into the on-going educational programs, the requirement for supplementary funding is expected to decrease.

The basic objective of the second-language program in District No. 15, in the greater Moncton area, is to offer all pupils the opportunity to select program options which will allow them to achieve optimum levels of bilingualism in relation to their capabilities and interests. The program includes early immersion, and also provides the late immersion option to

those who wish to achieve an adequate level of bilingualism but do not support the early immersion concept; the choice is left to the parents. The early immersion program was started in 1970 with four pilot classes, and the late immersion program in 1979 with five pilot classes. Early immersion was requested by parents as a result of the experience in St. Lambert, Quebec; late immersion was due to community seeking viable alternatives to early immersion. In addition to the early and late immersion options, the second-language program also includes a traditional French-as-a-second-language program — the core program. The curriculum of the second-language program follows the New Brunswick Department of Education guidelines and has been developed by District No. 15 staff in consultation with the Department.[41]

The aim of the core program is to provide all pupils with an opportunity to achieve French skills which will "satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements."[42] The program is meant to provide "a very good grounding in the basic language skills".[43] In grades 1 to 3 the children study a cultural component within the parameters of the social studies program, in order to learn to appreciate French culture and to develop favourable attitudes toward the second language and toward those who speak it as their first language. The cultural component studied in grades 1 to 3 is followed by language instruction for fifty minutes per day in grades 4 to 6. In grade 7 the pupils may choose among three options:

> *The Late Immersion Option* with 80 per cent of the time in French in grades 7 and 8, followed by a maintenance program in grade 9, with 40 per cent of instruction in French.
>
> *The Core Option* with one fifty-minute period of French instruction daily.
>
> *The Modified Option* with one daily period of French instruction but at a less complex level of difficulty, the focus being on spoken language.

The late immersion option is available to all pupils who are promoted to grade 7. In grades 7 and 8 all subjects are taught in French with the exception of one daily period of English language arts. Subjects such as art, music, physical education, industrial arts, and home economics are usually taught through English, however. In grades 9 to 12 French language arts and social studies are taught in French while all other subjects are

taught in English.[44] The late immersion option is available in certain schools, with transportation provided by the School Board. (See Appendix 2: School District No. 15, Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9)

The early immersion option begins at the grade 1 level, and it is also available to all pupils. All subjects are taught in French in grades 1 to 3. At the grade 4 level one daily period of English language arts is introduced. The amount of instruction given through English increases over the years: in grade 5 French language arts, social studies, science, health, and physical education are taught in French while English language arts, mathematics, and music are taught in English. In grade 6 instruction in French language arts, social studies, health, and physical education is given in French while English language arts, mathematics, music, and science are given in English. In grades 7 to 12 French language arts and social studies are the only subjects taught in French; all other subjects are taught in English.[45] The statistical information given by the School Board shows that the number of pupils in the early and late immersion programs has been going up, while the number of those in the core program seems to be going down:

School year	Total school population	E.I. (1–12)	L.I. (7–8)	Core (4–10) (Elective 11–*12*)
1981–82	13,285	2,490	611	5,949
1982–83	13,130	2,761	863	5,463
1983–84	12,926	3,024	984	5,119

The parents and pupils who have chosen the early or late immersion option are very enthusiastic and supportive of the program.[46]

24. Experience about the System

Bilingual education raises many questions. Do children who are taught through a second language during their first years of schooling suffer in the linguistic development of their mother tongue? How well do they progress in the development of the second language? How well do they achieve in other subjects, such as mathematics, taught through the second language? How does this type of instruction affect the general intellectual development of the children? The Canadian experience gives light to these questions.

241. The St. Lambert Project

The St. Lambert Experiment was one of the earliest French immersion projects in Canada (See pages 107–108). Although a number of parents became interested immediately, there were conflicting opinions about this type of program. At the request of the School Board and the Provincial Ministry of Education Wallace E. Lambert, Professor of Psychology at McGill University, was asked to evaluate the program. The evaluation program as well as the results through grade 4 are described in detail by Lambert and Tucker in *Bilingual Education of Children: The St. Lambert Experiment.* The major purpose of the study was to evaluate the impact of elementary schooling conducted primarily in a second language on the linguistic, intellectual, and attitudinal development of children; it was planned as a longitudinal, continuing study. Since the report on the St. Lambert Project was published, it has served as a research model, which has provided a lot of information for the development of French immersion programs in other communities.

Research plan

The first stage of the research program was a small-scale socio-linguistic survey of the communities involved. Information was gathered about the family's socio-economic status, parents' aspirations for their children's educational future, and their attitudes toward the ethno-linguistic group whose language their children were to learn. This information was used as a basis for equating and comparing the classes. As for the children themselves, their performance on nonverbal IQ tests was assessed in order to establish base lines for equating groups and making comparisons later. The general idea was to collect information about the community, the parents, and the children involved, before examining the program itself.

The pilot group consisted of twenty-six children from a middle-class background. No attempts were made to pre-select or screen the children on the basis of IQ or other variables; the group included children with a wide range of IQ. The progress of these children was compared each year with that of carefully selected control classes of French children taught in

French and English children taught in English. The second year a follow-up class was included in the study in order to test the results received with the pilot class. Great care was taken to see that all these children came from comparable middle-class neighbourhoods.

Efforts were also made to equate the program of study. The kindergarten program, which all of the immersion children attended, was conducted exclusively in French. It meant that the children could be introduced to French in a natural way. The goal of the teacher was to prepare the children so that they could handle the content of the curriculum at the grade 1 level.

The program of study of the immersion children followed closely the curricula of French-Canadian school systems and that of lycées in France; some of the books were French Canadian, others from France. All of the materials were designed for children who spoke French as their first language. The curricula for both kindergarten and grade 1 were comparable to those of English-Canadian schools.

In *Bilingual Education of Children: The St. Lambert Experiment* Lambert and Tucker give somewhat contradictory statements about the overall ratio of English to French in the immersion program:

> "This book tells the story of a longitudinal investigation of two groups of English-Canadian children whose elementary schooling was conducted exclusively in French in kindergarten and in the first grade and, from grades II through IV, mainly in French, except for two half-hour daily periods of English Language Arts."[47]
>
> "Even so, changes could be introduced easily into the program to provide more opportunities for expression by, for example, teaching physical education, music and plastic arts (subjects that lend themselves naturally to social communication) in French."[48]
>
> "While there was only seventy minutes of formal English instruction daily, English was nonetheless the language of instruction for music, art, physical education, and the library period. Thus English was used for 40 percent of the complete grade II curriculum."[49]

Here "elementary schooling" must refer to formal instruction, which was conducted exclusively in French in grade 1, and English language arts were introduced in grade 2. Nevertheless, the "fun subjects" (art, music, and physical education) were taught in English. So English was used for about 40 per cent of the total curriculum.

Testing procedure

All of the children involved in the experiment were given an extensive battery of tests each spring by a small team of research assistants. The areas assessed were French language skills, English language skills, mathematics skills, foreign sound discrimination, general intellectual development, and attitudinal development. At the grade 1 level the children were given the following tests:[50]

1. Word Knowledge in English. The child is presented with a series of illustrations, with four words beside each, and his task is to find the word that best describes the illustration. This test requires a reading skill in English.

2. Word Discrimination in English. This test assesses the child's ability to associate the spoken word with its written form, and also requires a basic ability to read English.

3. a) Reading Skills: Comprehension of English Sentences. In this test the child has to select the one sentence out of three that correctly describes an illustration.

b) Reading Skills: Comprehension of Paragraph-length Material in English. The child reads several sentences, and then answers a question concerning them.

4. Arithmetic Concepts and Skills in English. The purpose of these tests is to assess the child's mathematics skills; the tests are given in English. They include numerical and quantitative concepts, verbal problem solving as well as addition and subtraction.

5. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, in English. This test measures the child's auditory vocabulary. He is required to match a word to one of several illustrations.

6. Word Association Analysis, English and French. Each child hears a list of words, and is required to say the first word that comes to his mind when he first hears the stimulus word.

7. Speaking Skill in English. Each child is presented a filmstrip story, accompanied by a dialogue in English. After the presentation, he is asked to retell the story.

8. Speaking Skill in French. This test is essentially similar to the previous one.

9. Phoneme Production, in French. The child is asked to repeat phrases spoken by an adult. His responses are recorded on tape and analyzed.

10. School Commission Mathematics Test, in French. This is another mathematics test, but given in French; it was designed by the Catholic School Commission of Montreal.

11. Reading Skills in French: Word Discrimination and Sentence Comprehension. This is a test of French reading skills; the instructions are also given in French.

12. Word Discrimination in French. This is a French version of the English test described above.

13. Phoneme Discrimination in Russian. The test was done to find out whether early bilingualism has a generally favourable effect on learning other languages.

14. June Retesting of Intelligence. The Progressive Matrices test developed by Raven was administered to all children to determine whether any changes had taken place in the immersion group compared with the control groups.

In most cases, the tests administered to higher grades were standard extensions of those described above. At the grade 2 level, however, problems of dwindling numbers in the original control classes began to arise; quite a few children moved out of the region and some classes were combined, which made the comparison very difficult. Attention was therefore shifted to tests in French and English where city-wide norms were available. This enabled the researchers to assess the progress of the children in terms of city-wide norms. Basically, however, the tests were not changed very much over the years.

Results

The following results give an answer to the major questions which puzzle the parents and educators involved in immersion education:

After their first year of school, the immersion class fell below the English control class on tests of English word knowledge, word discrimination, and reading skill. They did surprisingly well, however, without any training in English. In English reading skills they reached the 15th percen-

tile on American norms, which suggests that a good deal of transfer from French to English had taken place. In comprehending spoken English and in speaking English the immersion children were as competent as the English control group. After completing grade 2, the only sign of retardation was some trouble with spelling in English; they still scored at the 70th percentile on national norms for spelling ability. At the end of grade 3 the immersion group performed as well as the controls on standard tests of English language competence, with the exception of some difficulty with English rules of punctuation. The overall answer was that the immersion children were doing just as well as the English control group at the end of grade 4, showing no symptons of retardation or negative transfer.

How well did the children progress in French? At the end of grade 1, the immersion class was definitely poorer than their French peers in reconstructing a story, overall expression, errors of grammar, liaison, and rhythm as well as intonation. Nevertheless, they had made good progress in the mastery of basic French sounds. At the end of grade 2, there was substantial progress in both the active and passive features of competence in French. Their listening-comprehension scores from grade 2 on were in general comparable to those of the controls. The immersion children were at the same level as their French peers in French word knowledge, word discrimination, and reading, but they were not native-like in their command of oral French. After their third year in school, the immersion children were doing remarkably well: on city-wide norms for achievement in French they scored at around the 60th percentile, which means that they performed as well or better, on the average, than 50 per cent of Montreal's French-speaking children following all-French programs. By the end of grade 4, the immersion group had not yet achieved perfectly native-like competence in spoken French; they made more errors than their French peers, especially errors of gender and contraction. It is interesting to note that they did better when they invented stories of their own than when they retold somebody else's stories, suggesting that they were particularly clever when permitted to express their own flow of ideas.

Among the non-language subjects mathematics was the only one assessed in the study. On tests of computational and problem-solving arithmetic, the immersion group performed as well as their peers, scoring beyond the 80th percentile on national norms; they had been able to grasp,

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assimilate, and utilize mathematical principles taught through French, and they had transferred their knowledge to English. This was shown by the fact that the immersion children were equally capable of solving mathematical problems whether the instructions were given in English or in French.

As the children developed bilingual skills, did they show a generalized sensitivity for the sounds of a totally foreign language? This was examined from grade 1 on by comparing the children in the immersion class and the monolinguals in the control classes on their abilities to discriminate the phonemes of Russian. By grade 4 no evidence was found to support the theory. Naturally, other factors may be found which differentiate bilinguals from monolinguals when learning a new language.

What effect did the bilingual program have on the measured intelligence of the children involved? There were no signs of any intellectual deficit or retardation attributable to the bilingual experience, judging from yearly retesting with standard measures of intelligence.

One of the objectives of bilingual education in Canada is often said to be creating understanding between the two ethno-linguistic groups. At the grade 2 and 3 levels the attitudes of the immersion children were much fairer and more charitable than those of their English and French peers: they were less ethnocentric and less biased toward their own ethnic group than the control groups. However, when retested a year later, both the grade 4 and 3 level immersion groups were found to be essentially similar to the English controls in their attitudes: neutral to slightly favourable toward European-French people, relatively hostile toward French-Canadian, and very favourable toward their own group. It is difficult to say what caused the change, but there were factors outside the linguistic experiment which may have played a role: this was the time of the separatist movements in Quebec with the accompanying hostility. The children also had contact in their school with French-Canadian children who came from relatively lower social-class backgrounds. There was no evidence that the children's self-concepts were confused; at all grade levels they described themselves in healthy terms.

The researchers were very impressed by the obvious transfer of skills from one language to the other, especially the skills of reading and calculating. These were developed exclusively through French and seemed to be

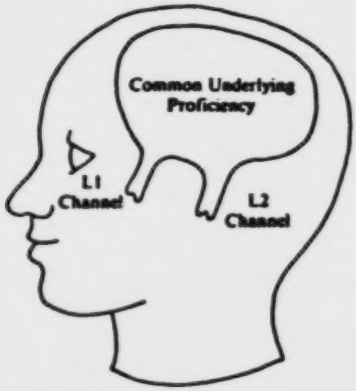
equally well and almost simultaneously developed in English. They felt that this could also be evidence of a more abstract form of learning that took place independently of the language of learning.[51]

It is interesting to compare their findings with the Interdependence Hypothesis, developed by Cummins:

> "To the extent that instruction in L_x is effective in promoting proficiency in L_x, transfer of this proficiency to L_y will occur provided there is adequate exposure to L_y (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn L_y."[52]

The fact that experience with either language can promote development of the proficiency underlying both languages can be illustrated in the following way:[53]

THE COMMON UNDERLYING PROFICIENCY MODEL (CUP) OF BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY



The same principle underlies immersion programs for majority language pupils as well as bilingual programs for language minority pupils.

By the end of grade 7, the researchers would not yet classify the immersion pupils as balanced bilinguals. Their oral communications in French were as complete and instructive as those of the French controls: they were

able to communicate in French very efficiently. Nevertheless, they did not have native-like skill with French vocabulary, grammar, or phonology.[54] The findings through grade 8 were not as impressive as they had been in the previous years. At this level instruction in French only comprised 30 per cent of the school day, however.[55]

242. Further Studies

Since the results of the pilot study at St. Lambert were published, several French immersion programs have undergone thorough evaluations in Canada. This serious research, which has been built up over the years, has lead to the breakdown of many popularly held misconceptions about bilingual education.

The French immersion program offered by the Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board is one of the French immersion programs evaluated in Ontario (See page 13). It has been compared with an English-language elementary program, which included French as a second language and some subject matter instruction in French.[56] In the immersion program all subject matter was taught in French with the exception of religious instruction, which was given in English. English language arts were introduced in grade 3, and by grade 4 the proportion of English was increased to 50 per cent. In the other alternative, initially seventy-five minutes per day were devoted to French language instruction and subject matter instruction in French. The program was as follows:[57]

— two fifteen-minute lessons of second-language learning daily,
— four fifteen-minute lessons of music weekly,
— six twenty-minute lessons of social studies weekly,
— one fory-five-minute lesson of art per week.

After the initial phase, the time devoted to French was reduced to sixty minutes per day.

The purpose of the Ottawa study was to examine the English and French language skills and the general academic achievement of the children involved. Attention was also paid to personality development and the possibility that the programs might result in an increased incidence of learning disabilities.

The achievement in English language skills and the general achievement in English were assessed by means of standardized tests, and by specially developed tests in some subject areas, in order to find out whether children educated in an immersion class could cope with tests designed for children in a regular English program.

In grades 1 and 2 the immersion children obtained lower scores on subtests of word knowledge, word discrimination, reading, and spelling in English. However, the performance of the children was much better than had been expected, because they had not received any instruction in English language arts. At the grade 3 level, when English language arts were introduced, the first immersion group tested scored lower than the control group, but the follow-up group did as well as the children in the English program. In grade 4, the immersion group obtained higher, rather than lower, scores than the control group on some of the subtests and comparable on the rest. The findings suggest that both the immersion group and the English group with a seventy-five or sixty-minute French program were able to cope with standardized tests on English language skills, and that, by grade 4, the immersion group achieved results which were similar to those of the control group.

Standardized tests were also used to assess French language skills. The findings can be summarized by stating that there was a clear trend in favour of the immersion group from grade 1 to grade 5, as expected. They were progressing much faster than the control group, which in turn was progressing faster than children in traditional second-language programs. The immersion children were able to communicate without significant difficulty in French, but were not regarded as perfectly bilingual by the end of grade 5.

In arithmetic, the grade 1 immersion group obtained higher scores than the control group. In higher grades, the immersion group did not differ from the control group with the exception of grade 5, when the immersion group attained a somewhat lower score. This finding was out of phase with the total trend, however.

In grade 4, a survey was made about the pupils' opinions about the programs and about their attitudes toward learning French. The attitudes of both groups appeared quite positive, but the immersion children had a more positive attitude toward learning French. As fas as learning diffi-

culties are concerned, there was no evidence of any greater tendency toward learning difficulties on the part of the immersion children, presented as group averages. In some subtests, their scores were even superior to those of the control group.

Generally speaking, this study replicated the St. Lambert results. The linguistic and academic outcomes of early French immersion programs have been relatively consistent across Canada, confirming on a large scale the following findings:

— In grades 1 to 3, French immersion pupils do not achieve as well as their unilingually educated peers in English language skills. In particular, they have difficulty with such technical skills as reading, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. However, they catch up very fast, as soon as English language arts are introduced.

— The results in French language skills consistently reveal much superior performance of the immersion pupils compared with pupils who receive daily instruction in French as a second language, but they do not seem to reach native-like competence in French.

— Almost without exception, the immersion pupils perform as well as their unilingually educated peers in mathematics. The same applies to science and social studies. This aspect of French immersion programs has been studied by Barik and Swain, among others.[58]

It seems surprising that the immersion pupils have not reached native-like competence in French in spite of the early start and the intensive exposure to French in school. A study of the errors of immersion pupils has been conducted in Montreal by examining the speech data collected from the immersion and control groups in the St. Lambert experiment from grades 1 to 6. Each sentence was examined for completeness, correctness, errors in gender, errors in prepositions, errors in verbs, and pronominal errors. It appeared from the findings that immersion pupils made more errors than native speakers, and the gap between these two groups increased over time. In general, the speech samples of native speakers tended to be more homogenous and contained fewer errors than those of the immersion pupils. Many of the errors made by native speakers were errors of omission; they spoke more rapidly. The speech of the immersion pupils was much more varied: they made numerous errors of addition and omission, and their speech revealed interaction with the

mother tongue. French linguistic maturity was clearly lagging in the immersion pupils, but it was not a barrier to communication.[59] Further, in a detailed study of the verb system used by grade 5 pupils Harley and Swain concluded that, in general, immersion pupils used grammatically simpler verb systems than native speakers of the same age.[60]

Interaction with the mother tongue is also present in District No. 15 pupils. They tend to use expressions like "Je suis onze ans"; direct translation from English to French is evident. Interference seems to be mainly from English to French, but there may also be some in the direction of French to English in the spelling area. Pupils tend to add an "e" to a word where the final consonant is sounded, and there may be a tendency not to capitalize where necessary in English.[61]

In immersion programs emphasis is on communication, and pupils are encouraged to express their thoughts in French even before they know how. Swain suggests that immersion pupils may therefore be developing and reinforcing a classroom dialect of their own. Some of the errors they make disappear with time, but others persist. The classmates make the same errors, which serves to reinforce the language patterns used.[62] The difference between the speech of immersion pupils and their French peers may also be due to lack of interaction with native speakers of French. A native French-speaking teacher is the only French-speaking model for an immersion class; the classmates are native speakers of English. Obviously, there is no strong incentive to develop further toward balanced bilingualism once the pupils have reached a point where they can make themselves understood to the teacher and their classmates.[63] Beardsmore also suggests that with bilingual partners interference may be the norm, particularly for registering feelings like familiarity and solidarity.[64] A few more questions are of interest at this point. The research reports on French immersion give the general impression that immersion education is very successful. The pupils participating in these programs have developed far superior skills in French compared with those following a traditional French-as-a-second-language program, and their mother tongue development or academic achievement have not suffered. Are all types of French immersion programs equally successful in the Canadian setting? The vast majority of the studies have been conducted with predominantly middle-class children with no particular problems, who are therefore like

ly to be relatively successful in any educational program. Is French immersion an elite program? Is it open only to those who are likely to succeed in school?

Early, Late or Partial Immersion

French immersion has become an established form of bilingual education in Canada. Both early and late immersion programs have been assessed and proven successful. A lot of controversial theory has been written around bilingual education and language learning in general, however. Therefore one would expect the outcomes of the Canadian experiments to give some new light to the controversy. Although theoretically interesting, this question is also of great practical importance: parents and educators want to know which type of French immersion works best.

Early immersion programs have been based on the commonsense observation that young children pick up languages easily, and with a flawless accent. This observation has been given additional support by Penfield and Roberts, among others, who have presented their biological arguments in favour of the young language learner:

> "The time to begin what might be called a general schooling in secondary languages, in accordance with the demands of brain physiology, is between the ages of 4 and 10. The child sets off for school then, and he can still learn new languages directly without interposing the speech units of his mother tongue."[65]

Penfield and Roberts argue that young children learn a second language much in the same way as they learn their mother tongue, whereas young adults use their mother tongue units in the second language, and therefore speak with an accent and also use wrong constructions.[66]

The theories of the advantages of early language learning have been rejected by others, Burstall among them, who have found the greater maturity of the older learner to be an advantage, particularly in cognitive learning:

"Other things being equal, the older children tended to learn French more efficiently than the younger ones did. Compared with those who had been taught French from the age of eleven, pupils taught French from the age of eight did not eventually show any substantial gains in achievement. By the age of 16, the only area in which the pupils taught French from the age of eight consistently showed any superiority was that of listening comprehension."[67]

These experiences have been received from a national experiment in foreign-language teaching carried out in selected primary schools in England and Wales. Both of the theories have practical implications; the former leads to an expansion, the latter to a reduction of early language teaching.

Researchers at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education have evaluated different types of immersion programs annually since 1971, comparing the performance of pupils in each bilingual program with the performance of pupils in unilingual English programs.[68] Consistently, the early total immersion pupils did not achieve as well as their unilingual peers in measured English language skills until English language arts were introduced. In French language skills, the results consistently revealed superior performance of the immersion pupils compared with the pupils who followed a regular French-as-a-foreign-language program. As far as mathematics and science are concerned, both groups performed similarly. These results are very much consistent with those described earlier in this study.

The results obtained with the early partial immersion groups were slightly different. In English language skills, the partial immersion pupils did not achieve as well as their English-educated peers until the end of grade 3 or 4, even though one-half of their program was taught through English. The results related to the French language skills of the partial immersion pupils revealed superior performance compared with their peers in the regular stream, but their performance was not as good as that of the total immersion group. In mathematics and science, the partial immersion pupils performed equivalently or not as well as their peers. It may be that their level of French was not adequate to deal with the more sophisticated level of mathematics and science.[69]

The late partial French immersion program evaluated was that of the Peel County Board of Education, described above (See page 116). Even in this group, testing revealed an initial lag in English reading and vocabulary knowledge, which disappeared by the end of grade 9. Through the end of grade 9, the partial immersion pupils obtained higher scores in all French skills — reading and listening comprehension, writing and speaking — than the pupils following the core program. At the end of grade 12, both the immersion group and the control group were administered tests in French listening and reading comprehension. The listening comprehension score of the immersion pupils remained higher, but in reading comprehension the controls scored equivalently. The pupils continuing in the core program were found to make steady progress, whereas the performance of the immersion pupils seemed to be levelling off after the immersion experience.

These three groups have also been compared with each other; a French cloze test was administered to the lead group of pupils in each program in 1977: grade 6 of the early total immersion program, grade 7 of the early partial immersion program, and grade 13 of the late partial immersion program. The test was also administered to two groups of unilingual French pupils at the grade 6 and 12 levels in order to control differences due to age. The French cloze test consisted of a passage of 425 words. Several sentences at the beginning and end were left intact, and every seventh word was deleted in the body of the article resulting in a total of 41 blanks. The outcomes of the test were as follows:

— Grade 12 unilingual francophone group	27 out of 41
— Grade 13 late partial immersion	21
— Grade 6 unilingual	19
— Grade 6 early total immersion	17
— Grade 7 early partial immersion	12.5

The average score of the late partial immersion groups is higher than that of early total and partial immersion groups, but it is also higher than that of the unilingual French grade 6 group. If age is taken into consideration, it appears that the early total immersion group scores almost as well as their unilingual peers, whereas there is a six-point difference between

the partial immersion groups and their peers. On the basis of this test it seems that the early total immersion option produces pupils with a more native-like command of French than either the early or late partial immersion programs. In addition, pupils in the partial immersion programs have not avoided the initial lags in English language skills typical of total immersion programs. Total immersion pupils have also suffered from fewer short-term lags in content material learning than partial immersion pupils.

The studies conducted around bilingual education in Canada culminated in a policy document published in 1977 by the Ontario Ministry of Education called "Teaching and Learning French as a Second Language". This document stressed the importance of the number of hours of instruction in French, or in other subjects taught through French. It was argued that the more hours a pupil spends in French, the better his performance will be.[70] There is increasing evidence, however, which contradicts these findings. A comparison has been made between grade 8 early immersion pupils with over 4,000 hours of French and grade 10 late immersion pupils with approximately 1,400 hours of French. The early immersion pupils performed better on a test of French listening comprehension, but the performance of the late immersion pupils was superior in French reading comprehension. On a cloze test both groups scored equivalently. These results suggest that older learners are more efficient.[71] Research conducted by Genesee also suggests that a two-year late French immersion program — at least 80 per cent French in grades 7 and 8 — produces French language skills which are similar to those of an eight-year early immersion program in all areas of French language skills tested, with the exception of listening comprehension.[72]

How can these results be explained? Older learners are cognitively more mature; their ability to generalize and classify is obviously helpful in second-language learning — the pupils have already learned how to learn. In addition, they have already mastered the basic skills of reading and writing, and only need to learn the surface realizations demanded by the second language. Older learners have more knowledge which they can transfer to the second-language learning context. In order to explain the controversy of early versus late language learning, Cummins makes a distinction between the "basic interpersonal communicative skills" (BICS)

and the "cognitive and academic aspects of language proficiency" (CALP). CALP refers to those aspects of proficiency which are related to the development of cognitive and literacy skills in school contexts, whereas BICS refers more to language use, like oral fluency and accent. It seems that CALP is cross-lingual; once learned it can be transferred to another language, at least those language related skills which are essential to academic success. This could explain why older learners seem to make more rapid progress in the cognitive and academic aspects of language learning. Oral fluency and accent are the areas where young learners tend to achieve better than older learners.[73]

Stern is also one of those who, based on the Canadian experience, have tried to combine the theories of the advantages of early and late language learning:

> "In my view we must avoid the danger of creating a false dichotomy between Penfield and the theory of early language learning, and Burstall and the theory of later language learning, and of having to make a clear choice between them. On developmental grounds each age in life has probably its peculiar advantages and disadvantages for language learning."[74]

In spite of the recognition that instruction in the mother tongue will benefit second-language learning, Swain suggests that, for the majority child, the second language should be introduced as early as possible. This is because the majority child needs a lot of opportunity to develop a wide range of interpersonal communicative skills. The use of the mother tongue in the wider environment ensures that it will not be lost due to early second-language learning. Swain also stresses the importance of motivation; older learners may not perceive the need to put the time and energy into learning a second language, whereas young children are not aware of the challenge.[75]

Burstall criticizes the Canadian researchers by emphasizing the evidence which has accumulated about the superior efficiency of the older learner, and feels that systematic investigation of the alternative language programs for older learners should be given a priority, instead of concentrating on the early years of schooling.[76]

Generally, both early and late immersion programs have produced good results, while the partial immersion experience has not been as successful. At this point, however, the question of the relative effectiveness of early and late French immersion programs remains open. One of the explanations for the success of late immersion programs may also lie in the relative intensity of exposure to the second language: early immersion pupils continue with less than 50 per cent of French, while at least 80 per cent of the school day is in French for late immersion pupils in grades 7 and 8. The findings suggest that, for majority learners, it is important to continue intensive exposure to the second language in order to maintain the skills already learned.[77]

Is Immersion for Everyone?

With the exception of the Toronto French School, all immersion programs described in this study have been maintained by the public school system. It is typical of public schools that all children are accepted, and the same principle applies to French immersion. It is true that for the first years of some immersion programs pupils were selected on the basis of above-average IQ and generally high academic ability as well as the pupils' interest in and their parents' approval of the program, but subsequently even these programs have been opened to all pupils.[78] As a rule, the programs are available to all children, and there is no screening of the pupils on the basis of IQ or other variables:

> "The learners are selected without special attention to social class, intelligence, personality factors (such as shyness) or any language disabilities they may have."[79]

Nevertheless, there appears to be a tendency that parents who attend to the educational needs of their children choose immersion. This type of parent is usually more educated and may bias the social background of immersion pupils. In recent years, however, a greater number of pupils from all socio-economic backgrounds have been enrolled.[80]

Thinking of my own experience with our neighbourhood children in

Shediac, I have no doubt that French immersion was no elite program. It was open to all children, and children from all walks of life were enrolled. At that time Shediac was about 80 per cent French, 20 per cent English.[81] For children from relatively lower social-class backgrounds bilingualism was experienced as a necessity: a requirement in any service job. Civil service was seen as an opportunity for bilingual middle-class children.

It is another question whether everybody succeeds in a French immersion class as well as he would succeed in a regular class. What about children with low intelligence or learning disabilities? One could think that they have enough trouble in school without the additional burden of another language. Nevertheless, the picture many reports give is fairly rosy:

> "Pupils who are superior, average, or weak progress at their own rate and do as well academically as their peers in the regular stream."[82]

The tests conducted with pupils in the French immersion programs of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal support the above view. The findings suggest that factors other than the purely intellectual ones may contribute to second-language learning; pupils of below average intelligence benefited from the immersion programs by developing French skills which were superior to those of their peers in a regular program. They suffered no mother tongue deficiences as a result of participation in immersion programs. There is no mention of students with particular problems due to French immersion.[83]

The New Brunswick School District No. 15 discourages transferring children with difficulties to a regular class unless there is an emotional or attitudinal problem related to immersion. It is felt that most pupils who have difficulties do so mainly because of learning problems and not because of the immersion experience.[84]

More negative evidence can also be found. There are reports of children who have not succeeded in French immersion classes in spite of at least average intelligence. Several causes of this have been suggested; among them a lack of aptitude for second-language learning or something in the child's attitude which might prevent progress. Hyperactive children are a high risk group because of their inattentiveness and restlessness in the

classroom. Increasing numbers of these children have been referred to the Neuropsychology Laboratory at the Royal Ottawa Hospital for an assessment. The aim of the studies has been to find out if these children have a characteristic profile and if they resemble those who in general have difficulty in school. The findings did not support the view that these children would have experienced the same difficulty in a regular program; they rather supported the view that the children with normal abilities for school progress in their mother tongue have failed in a French immersion program due to a mild specific maturational lag.[85]

243. Practical Findings

The Recruiting and Training of Teachers

The success of any educational program depends on qualified teachers. The teachers recruited for the immersion programs are required to be bilingual: they must have the fluency of a native French speaker, preferably they should be native speakers of French. In the St. Lambert experiment, every attempt was made to select "qualified native French-speaking teachers".[86] At the Allenby Public School, Toronto, it was also determined that "the teacher should be a native French speaker."[87] In general, specialized training in second-language teaching has not been considered necessary or even desirable. Exceptions can be found, however. At the Allenby Public School the kindergarten teacher was required to have certification and experience in teaching French as a second language.[88] Also in District No. 15 the ideal qualification is a bilingual teacher who has training in second-language teaching.[89] Some of the teachers have been French Canadian, others European or North African. I have not read about much difficulty in finding teachers for immersion classes, but finding enough qualified teachers for an expanding immersion program may be difficult, as experienced by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal.[90]

A lot of attention has been paid to in-service teacher training. As soon as appointments were made, School District No. 26 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, began an intensive in-service training program with immersion teachers. Among other things, it included visits to operating classes in other districts, a workshop under the leadership of a specialist from Mon-

treal, and an active involvement in the selection of materials."[91] School District No. 15 also counts on in-service workshops.[92] In Montreal, pre-service workshops were conducted each fall for the participating teachers.[93] Even summer courses have been offered to teachers of immersion classes.[94]

There is no doubt that immersion programs constitute a threat to English-speaking teachers. The possibility of dislocation naturally increases as the program extends, and a sudden large-scale implementation of this type of education cannot therefore be considered.

Materials

Obtaining materials for French immersion classes is another challenge. One solution is to use the basic curriculum and materials used by French-speaking children in Canadian schools, and some of these materials have actually been used in French immersion classes. This solution has obvious advantages; teachers with experience from French-Canadian schools are familiar with the materials, and using them does not involve any additional costs. Canadian materials in French are less abundant than those in English, however, and all of them are not suitable for English-speaking children; in fact most material has to be adapted for anglophone pupils.[95] At some grade levels there is the problem of finding materials for pupils at a level they can read. Therefore, a lot of new materials have been developed for immersion programs. One more challenge has been to equip school libraries with French reading materials.

Costs

From the economic point of view, it is justified to consider the costs of bilingual education:

> "French programs are costly. It costs more to instruct a child in an immersion program than in a regular program. The teachers in a core program are a direct overlay, and consequently expensive. Bilingual education costs more than a regular education."[96]

Why are the French programs so costly? Canadian schools offer a great variety of French programs: early immersion, late immersion, and the core program. There is a lot of administrative work involved, and extra supervisory staff is needed. As a rule, the immersion classes are of comparable size to other classes, but more teaching staff may be necessary to accommodate the immersion programs; they create more classes by spreading the total number of pupils into immersion and regular programs.[97] In some areas, additional costs have also been caused by small classes.[98] The costs of preparing and printing new materials is great, as well as that of buying French reference materials. If immersion education is provided in some schools only, it means extra travel for the pupils. The transportation is supplied by School Boards, and additional routes naturally increase the costs.

It must be remembered, however, that not only immersion programs are costly. The extra teachers needed in traditional second-language classes are also expensive. At the practical level, it is no doubt less expensive to introduce French immersion at a later grade level; fewer new materials need to be planned, fewer teachers need to be trained, and fewer children need extra transportation. The administrative costs would also be lower.

Miscellaneous Problems Experienced by School District No. 15[99]

Small classes caused by the immersion program have led to an increase in the number of combined classes. This means that for instance grade 1 and 2 regular groups may be taught together by the same teacher in one class-room. This involves extra work and inconvenience. Program differentiation has also resulted in streamed classes with relatively few high achievers in regular classes; the best pupils choose the immersion option.

Immersion classes are primarily funded within the regular school board budget. They are costly, and therefore they divert funds from other program needs and priorities. In addition, the immersion program constitutes a threat to unilingual English teachers, who continue to express fears for their professional and economic welfare.

3. BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN FINLAND TODAY

There are four foreign-language schools in Finland under the supervision of the Ministry of Education: The Helsinki German School (Deutsche Schule Helsinki), The English School, The Finnish-Russian School (Suomalais-venäläinen koulu), and The Helsinki French-Finnish School (Lycée franco-finlandais d'Helsinki).[100] All of these schools are situated in Helsinki. In addition to traditional second language teaching, they give bilingual education to Finnish children by using two languages for instruction, and the pupils have the option of choosing up to three additional languages at various grade levels. The bilingual schools of Finland are pilot schools; they have adjusted their curricula and teaching methods to the demands of the Finnish school system.

There are no bilingual Swedish–Finnish schools in Finland. Our bilingual children must choose either the Finnish or the Swedish stream, but they receive formal instruction in the second official language in all schools. (See Appendix 3 and Appendix 4: The Finnish Comprehensive-School System, Curriculum)

31. The Helsinki German School

The Helsinki German School is the oldest of the bilingual schools in Finland; it was founded as early as in 1881.[101] Instruction is given in German and Finnish by native teachers with the objective of preparing the pupils for the German and the Finnish matriculation examinations in addition to familiarizing them with the culture of both countries. There is no kindergarten in connection with the school, but there are separate German kindergarten classes in Helsinki.[102]

The school has experimented with different methods over the years. At first, Finnish- and Swedish-speaking children were only accepted provided that they had attended German kindergarten classes for at least two years. From grade 1 on, both Finnish and German children were taught together.[103] Today there are two different streams: the German program and the bilingual program. The German program starts at the grade 1 level, and very good German skills are a requirement. The bilingual program covers

grades 3 to 12; these children start in a regular Finnish school. Even though previous German skills are not necessary for the bilingual program, a special aptitude for learning foreign languages is a requirement.[104]

A great emphasis is given to the fact that the children are offered an opportunity to develop their primary language. Pupils with Finnish as a mother tongue in the German program receive instruction in Finnish language arts. Pupils in the bilingual program receive instruction in German language arts seven forty-minute periods weekly in grades 3 to 6, but from grade 7 on the amount of language instruction decreases. Instruction through German starts in grade 5 and German gradually becomes the language of instruction; the high school is German.[105] Most of the materials used are from Germany, or they have been prepared by the teachers. This causes problems for the Finnish matriculation examination; therefore basic vocabulary in mathematics is also given in Finnish at the high-school level.[106] A lot of emphasis is given to language teaching in general: in the bilingual program Swedish is taught from grade 7 on and English from grade 8 on. Instruction in French begins in grade 10. Attention is also paid to the status of the language in question: there are different programs for pupils who learn Finnish as a mother tongue, who learn Finnish as a second official language (Swedish-speaking children), and who learn Finnish as a foreign language (German-speaking children).[107] (See Appendix 5: The Helsinki German School, Curriculum, Grades 3 to 9)

In the school year 1982/1983 the total number of pupils was 687. The majority of them, 72.3 per cent, had Finnish as their mother tongue, 21 per cent had German, 4.5 per cent Swedish, and 2.2 per cent some other language.[108]

32. The English School

The English School was founded in 1945, and it is a private school like the German School. The school is run by Catholic Sisters, and Christian philosophy is strongly reflected in the educational aims:

> "In short, The English School attempts to place the pupil well on the high road leading to the three great aims of life: the attainment of

sound health, success in wordly pursuits, and the final goal of all human yearning, eternal salvation. To perform this task well is the educational aim of The English School since its foundation."[109]

The school offers a bilingual program of education: foreigners may receive an American elementary education in English and Finnish children receive a bilingual preparatory and intermediate education, which prepares them for high school.[110] The teachers are native speakers of English or Finnish.

The English School cannot accept all children who apply for registration into the kindergarten classes. Acceptance is based on placement in the registration list, and a child can be registered any time after his birth. At the end of the second kindergarten year approximately 32 children out of 50 are accepted to grade 1. The selection is based on the children's daily work records, the teacher's observation, and a test. Attention is also paid to the children's ability to concentrate and to adjust to the discipline of the school. There is also a waiting list for pupils applying for entry into more advanced levels. Acceptance is made on the basis of the date of registration, but these pupils may be administered tests by The English School, if deemed necessary, and their latest reports are also required.[111]

The languages of instruction are both Finnish and English: some subjects are taught completely in English, others completely in Finnish, and on occasion the teacher may use the other language to explain. There is also some separate English teaching for English children and Finnish teaching for Finnish children. The kindergarten is completely English, and instruction in Finnish is introduced in grade 1. Swedish-speaking children do not receive instruction in Swedish as a mother tongue, but they may be given extra work in Swedish by the teacher. The amount of English language and reading increases relatively over the years. In the preparatory classes the subjects taught through Finnish are Finnish language arts and religion. In mathematics, the book is in one language, and the teaching in the other. Drawing is in English, and the children sing both English and Finnish songs.[112]

In the intermediate classes French, history, geography, general science, biology, and art are taught through English, whereas Finnish, Swedish, German, and vocational guidance are given in Finnish, as well as history

and geography in grade 5. The remaining subjects are taught through Finnish and English: there are separate groups in physics and chemistry for Finnish and English children. As a whole, the amount of instruction through Finnish increases over the years. A lot of emphasis is given to language teaching in general. All pupils receive instruction in Swedish in intermediate grades 1 to 5, and they may choose to study German or French in grades 4 and 5. More hours are devoted to all languages in The English School than in the Finnish comprehensive-school system.[113] (See Appendix 6: The English School, Curriculum)

Sister Renée Brinker would define most pupils who graduate from The English School as bilingual. Some have continued their education in the United States with very good results.[114]

The total school enrollment in 1982 was 431, including the pre-school classes. Twenty-one of these pupils were classified as "foreign special pupils": pupils who have a special permission to study in The English School on a temporary basis. The figures by mother tongue indicate that 84.6 per cent of the pupils were Finnish-speaking, 8.3 per cent were Swedish-speaking, and 7.1 per cent had some other language as their mother tongue.[115] Some of the Finnish children were born in countries like the USA, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, and Australia; several Finnish families who have returned to Finland from an English-speaking country have decided to enroll their children in The English School.

33. The Finnish–Russian School

The Finnish–Russian School — a state-owned school under special legislation — has given bilingual education to Finnish children since 1955. The objective of the school is to familiarize the pupils with the Russian language and culture, in addition to giving them a Finnish education. The school has a kindergarten class, grades 1 to 9 of the Finnish comprehensive school system, and a high school.[116]

Acceptance into the kindergarten class is based on placement in the registration list. The bilingual kindergarten prepares the children for grade 1. A great emphasis is given to the mother tongue — as a basis of all linguistic, social, and personality development. The children are familiar-

ized with the Finnish alphabet, but they also receive instruction in Russian with the objective of developing their listening-comprehension skills and of acquiring very basic oral skills. By the end of the kindergarten year, the active Russian vocabulary of the children is about 150 words and they have learned to recognize 150 more words. About 80 to 85 per cent of these children are actually accepted to grade 1; selection is based on the teacher's statement. Finnish-speaking children who have not attended the kindergarten class and apply for registration into grade 1 are administered a psychological test.[117]

Russian is taught as a foreign language four forty-five-minute periods a week in grades 1 to 4, and from then on four to five periods a week through grade 9. In grades 1 to 6 the main language of instruction is Finnish, based on the principle of stabilizing the mother tongue first. The amount of instruction through Russian increases gradually together with the level of the pupils' understanding so that, in principle, by grade 7 the main language of instruction is Russian. A system has also been developed in which one teacher gives a class instruction through Finnish for some time, and after that another teacher takes over in Russian. This is done because enough bilingual teachers are not available to guarantee all pupils an equal amount of instruction through Russian. In addition, instruction in Swedish begins in grade 7, English is elective from grade 5 on, and French or German from grade 10 on. A need to give instruction in Swedish as a mother tongue has not been experienced. At the high-school level, instruction is given through Finnish and Russian.[118] (See Appendix 7: The Finnish–Russian School, Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9)

As a result of bilingual education the pupils achieve very good skills in Russian, but this has not been achieved without compromising. It is experienced as a problem that more hours are devoted to the second language than is customary in the Finnish school system. Moreover, part of the instruction is given through Russian. All this must not be done at the expense of the pupils' academic achievement or the length of the school day. Finnish–Russian education easily becomes too demanding; between 1970 and 1981 less than one-half of the pupils who left the school graduated while the rest withdrew for some reason. Therefore a lot has been done to develop the teaching methods. Shortage of bilingual teachers and Russian teaching materials have been experienced as additional problems.[119]

The total enrollment in the school year 1982/1983 was 755, including the kindergarten class. Out of these pupils 97.6 per cent had Finnish as their mother tongue, and 2.4 per cent Russian or some other language.[120]

34. The Helsinki French–Finnish School

The French–Finnish School — a state-owned school under special legislation — was established in 1956 with the objective of familiarizing the pupils with the French language and culture in addition to giving them a Finnish education. The school includes kindergarten classes, comprehensive school classes 1 to 9 as well as high-school classes 10 to 12. There is also a day-care center in connection with the school. The pupils normally start in the kindergarten classes; there is a psychological test, and a French language test is administered at the end of the kindergarten. Pupils with sufficient French skills may also be enrolled into higher grades.[121]

The languages of teaching are both French and Finnish. The kindergarten is completely French. In grades 1 and 2 the subjects taught through Finnish are Finnish language arts and religion. From then on, the amount of instruction through Finnish gradually increases so that by grade 12 French is the only subject taught through French.[122] In kindergarten and grades 1 to 4 at least two-thirds of the total hours of instruction are given in French; in grades 5 to 9 and at the high-school level the total amount of instruction through French is at least one-fifth. Altogether this results in at least 43 per cent of instruction through French in the school. Foreign languages, which are primarily taught through the language in question, are included in the subjects taught through Finnish. A lot of emphasis is given to language teaching in general. The time devoted to French is much more than the Finnish standard. In addition, all pupils start Swedish in grade 7, and English is elective from grade 5 on. At the high-school level instruction may also be given in Spanish, Italian, Latin, German, and Russian. In grades 1 to 6, Swedish-speaking children may receive instruction in Swedish as a mother tongue, as well as instruction in religion through Swedish.[123] (See Appendix 8 and Appendix 9: The French–Finnish School, Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9)

The pupils of the Helsinki French-Finnish School acquire very good skills in French. Their listening-comprehension skill is very good, they speak French fluently, but they make mistakes.[124]

The total school enrollment in 1982/1983 was 710. According to Jarmo Anttila, the principal, the majority of the pupils are Finnish-speaking, there are some Swedish-speaking pupils but hardly any French.[125]

35. The Bilingual Schools of Finland: a Comparison

There are two languages of instruction in the bilingual schools of Finland, and a lot of emphasis is given to language teaching in general. All of the schools emphasize the importance of mother tongue development but otherwise the programs are different. The bilingual program of The Helsinki German School and The Finnish-Russian School gradually increase the amount of instruction through the foreign language together with the pupils' level of understanding; The Helsinki French-Finnish School and The English School more boldly immerse the children in the foreign language from the beginning, gradually increasing the amount of instruction through Finnish. The German program of The Helsinki German School is meant for children with previous German skills; all instruction is given through German except Finnish language arts. The group includes German children and also Finnish children who have learned German in kindergarten, normally for two years.[126]

Another difference between these schools is that in addition to a Finnish education The Helsinki German school provides a German education in German and The English School an American elementary education in English. There is a Russian and a French school in connection with the embassy of the country in question in Helsinki, which partly explains the low percentage of foreign pupils in The Finnish-Russian School and The Helsinki French-Finnish School.[127] There is also a small private international school in Helsinki with English as the sole language of instruction.[128]

The kindergarten classes of The English School and The Helsinki French-Finnish School are taught completely in the foreign language whereas the kindergarten of The Finnish-Russian School is bilingual. All of the schools start instruction in Finnish as a mother tongue at the grade

l level. In The Helsinki French–Finnish School Swedish-speaking children may be taught Swedish as a mother tongue in grades 1 to 6. Swedish as a mother tongue is included in the curriculum of The Helsinki German School at the high-school level, but it is not included in the curriculum of The English School or The Finnish–Russian School.

More time is devoted to language teaching in the bilingual schools than the Finnish standard. All of the schools give instruction in Finnish and Swedish in addition to the foreign language in question, and the pupils of The German School also study English from grade 8 on. In addition, all schools offer a choice of elective languages: The English School French or German in intermediate grade 4; The Helsinki French–Finnish School English in grade 5; and The Finnish–Russian School English in grade 5 and French or German in grade 8.

One way of evaluating the results of the bilingual schools is to examine the outcomes of Finnish matriculation examinations. The following statistics indicate the marks on compulsory languages in the 1979 matriculation examination, together with the mean scores:

The Helsinki German School[129, 130]

	l	m	c	b	a	i	mean score
Primary Language	3	7	4	1			4.8
Second Official Language	7	2	4				5.2
German	10	4	1				5.6
English	2						6.0
Total (all subjects)	38	21	10	7	7		4.9

The Finnish–Russian School[131]

	l	m	c	b	a	i	mean score
Primary Language	13	22	7	5	2		4.8
Swedish	1	5	9	19	9	6	2.9
Russian	31	7	5	3	3		5.2
Total (all subjects)	56	54	50	52	40	9	4.0

The Helsinki French–Finnish School[132]

	l	m	c	b	a	i	mean score
Primary Language	10	6	6	4	2		4.6
Second Official Language	11	4	8	4		1	4.8
French	13	8	6				5.3
English	1						6.0
Total (all subjects)	63	45	31	16	4	1	4.9

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The mean scores indicate that the pupils of the bilingual schools have scored their best marks on the official foreign language of the school; German 5.6, Russian 5.2, and French 5.3. The mean scores on second official language are also above those on all subjects in The Helsinki German School, 5.2. The pupils of The Helsinki French-Finnish School have scored slightly lower, 4.8, and the pupils of The Finnish-Russian School 2.9, which is clearly below their mean scores on all subjects. There is very little variation as regards primary language. The total mean scores of The Helsinki German School and The Helsinki French-Finnish School were 4.9 whereas The Finnish-Russian School scored 4.0.

These schools cannot be taken as a model for a bilingual curriculum in the public school system as there is some type of screening of pupils in all of them. This may also partly explain the good results in languages achieved by the pupils of the bilingual schools in the matriculation examination.

4. IMMERSION CLASSES IN FINNISH SCHOOLS?

French immersion seems remarkably effective in the Canadian setting. Could the same method be applied to teaching Swedish to Finnish children? Is the Canadian model a solution for all communities planning programs of bilingual education? Is there any need for bilingual education in Finland?

41. Swedish in Finland: a Linguistic Outline

Swedish has a long tradition in Finland.[133] Permanent Swedish settlement on the mainland dates back to the 12th and the 13th centuries, and the Province of Åland was already settled by then. Gradually Finland became part of Sweden, and the Swedish settlement continued. Swedish became the language of the civil service and education. It was the majority language in the kingdom whereas only 16 per cent of the population of Finland were estimated to be Swedish-speaking at the beginning of the 17th century.

The Swedish era ended in 1809 when Finland became Grand Duchy of Russia. Nevertheless, Swedish remained for a long time the language of the civil service, but it became a minority language of the nation. From the 1820s on nationalistic ideas started to be expressed; Finnish was to become the language of the civil service and culture. Toward the end of the 19th century the nationalists reached their first important victories. Finnish became equal with Swedish in matters which directly involved the people, and the first Finnish educational institution was established. This was also the time of the first language dispute; both the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking population fought for their language rights.

Finland's becoming independent in 1917 made the nationalistic questions even more critical. The Constitution Act of 1919 recognized Finnish and Swedish as the official languages of the republic. The 1920s and the 1930s were characterized by another language dispute; this time efforts were made to restrict the language rights of the Swedish-speaking population. In 1940 both disputing parties came to an agreement about a language peace. Ever since, communication across the language border has been relatively peaceful — at least on the national level.

According to the Constitution Finnish and Swedish are the official languages of the country, and the citizens of Finland have the right to use Finnish or Swedish before courts and authorities. The cultural and economic needs of the two language groups must be equally protected by the state. Finnish and Swedish are the two official languages of Finland, with equal rights and privileges. Finnish and Swedish are also the administrative languages of the country; the top civil service must be bilingual, and persons holding minor positions are expected to be able to satisfy limited work requirements in both languages. More detailed provisions regarding the official languages were given in the Language Act of 1922. The act defines the obligations of the authorities and the privileges of the citizens. Provisions regarding the language question are also included in other acts.

Finnish communities are divided into four groups by mother tongue:

— unilingual Finnish communities,
— unilingual Swedish communities,
— bilingual communities with a Finnish majority,
— bilingual communities with a Swedish majority.

If less than 8 per cent of the population of a community speak the other language the community is unilingual. If the minority is at least 8 per cent or 3,000 people the community is bilingual. Nevertheless, a bilingual community does not become unilingual until the minority falls below 6 per cent. A decision about the official language of a community is made every 10 years on the basis of census data.[134]

The following census data indicate the population of Finland by mother tongue and adminstrative district on December 31, 1979:[135]

	Total population	Swedish-speaking population actual figures	%
Uusimaa	1,119,731	146,135	13.1
Turun ja Porin laani	701,700	28,143	4.0
Åland	22,608	21,506	95.1
Vaasan laani	440,177	99,494	23.1
Kymen laani	345,053	2,238	0.6
Hämeen laani	662,562	2,457	0.3
Mikkelin laani	209,199	201	0.1
Kuopion laani	251,715	290	0.1
Pohjois-Karjalan laani	176,612	92	0.05
Keski-Suomen laani	242,439	307	0.1
Oulun lääni	414,436	482	0.1
Lapin laani	195,060	209	0.1
Total	4,771,292	301,554	6.3

Areas with major Swedish-speaking population are situated along the coastal regions of Finland in the Province of Åland, which is unilingual Swedish, and the administrative districts of Vaasan lääni, Uusimaa, and Turun ja Porin lääni. The unilingual Swedish communities on the mainland are situated in Vaasan lääni and Turun ja Porin lääni. Approximately 98 per cent of all Finland's Swedes live in the above mentioned areas. Outside Åland and the coastal regions they account for less than one per cent of the population. There is one bilingual community with a Finnish majority in Kymen lääni; the rest of Finland is unilingual Finnish.[136]

In 1979, 19.6 per cent of the Swedish-speaking population were living in unilingual Swedish communities, 35.2 per cent in bilingual communities with a Swedish majority, 41.5 per cent in bilingual communities with a Finnish majority, and 3.8 per cent in unilingual Finnish communities.[137]

42. Applicability of French Immersion to the Finnish Context

Those who write about French immersion agree on one point: it is not a universal solution for second-language teaching in all contexts. One cannot simply import a successful model of bilingual education from one situation and introduce it in another.[138] Lambert writes about the same question:

> "Perhaps it is wise to end this report with a general statement about the generalizability of such a program to other settings and other groups of children. Although the educational plan described here seems remarkably effective in this Canadian setting, it is not proposed as a universal solution for all communities planning programs of bilingual education."[139]

What is so special about the Canadian context? Canadian parents want French education for their children. The Finnish discussion about bilingual education has been dominated by the problems of Finnish immigrants to Sweden; they insist on education through the mother tongue for their children. The demands are supported by Finnish authorities. Speaking about Finnish children in Sweden, Kaarina Suonio, Minister of Education, feels that bilingualism can best be achieved by teaching Swedish more effectively instead of giving instruction in other subjects through Swedish. According to her instruction through Swedish does not lead to bilingualism but to semilingualism and the accompanying retardation of intellectual, emotional, and social development.[140] Canadian researchers have also paid attention to this type of controversy. Lambert continues:

> "Instead we have in mind a much more general guiding principle: in any community where there is a serious widespread desire or need for a bilingual or multilingual citizenry, priority for early schooling should be given to the language or languages least likely to be developed otherwise, that is, the languages most likely to be neglected."[141]

Swain agrees with Lambert:

> "For the majority child, the suggestion is that the second language be introduced as early as possible in a way that allows for the development of communicative skills."[142]

"Considering now the minority language child, the suggestion is that second language instruction be put off until as late as possible, and that in no case should instruction in the second language replace completely instruction in the first language at any point in the students' schooling."[143]

The present situations in Canada and Sweden are different. In Canada the parents and their children are part of the dominant, majority group. Research findings reveal that learning a second language through immersion does not pose a threat to their cultural identity or to the maintenance of their mother tongue. Finnish immigrants are a minority group in Sweden. Even under favourable circumstances, they need instruction through Finnish in order to maintain their mother tongue in a Swedish environment.

Majority group membership of participants is not the only characteristic which has made French immersion a success in Canada. The first immersion programs were initiated as a result of pressure from English-speaking parents; many Canadian parents have been actively interested in their children's education and involved in the initiation and implementation of immersion programs. They want the children to learn French, but not at the expense of their mother tongue or academic achievement. French is a high-prestige language in Canada; it is an international language and one of Canada's two official languages. Canadians also know that bilingualism opens up job opportunities. All this has created positive attitudes toward learning French. Nevertheless, participation in the program is voluntary; parents can always choose a regular program for their children. According to Swain it is doubtful whether an immersion program would succeed if these background characteristics were not present, even if the structure of the program and the methodology were identical with those of the Canadian immersion education.[144]

It is typical of Canadian immersion education that learners of French are separated from native speakers. This is done in order to make sure that all children enter the program with the same level of language skills, which permits them equal learning opportunities. It is also important that the teachers are bilingual in English and French. In class they speak French only, but they make use of English by understanding what the child says. The teachers can respond to the child when they understand him; mean-

ingsful discourse is a crucial element in language acquisition. The child can guess the meaning right when he hears the kind of things which he expects to hear. In addition, English is always incorporated into the curriculum. English literacy skills are usually taught from grade 3 on, and at later grade levels English is used for teaching other subjects.[145]

Immersion education provides a setting which resembles a natural language acquisition situation in some important respects; one is the opportunity to use the language for real communication. The initial focus is on comprehension, and the method is to teach about the subject content and not about the language. However, special instructional techniques are used; key lexical items are taught while trying to convey a real message, for instance through the use of pictures. In communication, the focus is on the message and not on the form. French literacy skills are incorporated into the curriculum, and more attention is paid to grammar rules at the later grade levels.[146]

In Finland, most of the above mentioned background characteristics are present. Finnish-speaking children are also part of the dominant, majority group. In Canada, 25.7 per cent of the population speak French as a mother tongue; in Finland 6.3 per cent of the population belong to the Swedish-speaking minority. Like French in Canada, Swedish in Finland is one of the two official languages, and it is of importance outside Finland in Nordic relations. At this point it remains open whether parents and authorities feel motivated to initiate and implement an immersion program following the Canadian model.

43. Demand for an Alternative Swedish Program

431. The Need for Swedish

Finnish and Swedish are the official languages of Finland, and Swedish is also needed in Nordic relations. The possibilities to use the official languages outside Scandinavia are very limited, however. Therefore it has become a tradition in Finland to study several other languages in addition to Swedish; many languages are incorporated into the curricula of Finnish schools. As one of the official languages of the country, Swedish has a privileged position among these languages.

Several studies were conducted in the 1970s about the need for foreign languages in various professions in Finland. The results of these studies are relatively consistent as regards the relative importance of different languages and the level of the required language skill. In addition to Finnish, the language which is most needed in our country is Swedish, followed by English and German. There is also some need for French, Russian and Spanish, but very little for other languages. In general, the need for languages seems to be growing, together with more lively international relations. It also appears that the same persons need various combinations of several languages, together with professional training. When the number of people with certain language skills increases, the quality requirements also tend to grow. Persons in leading positions are expected to meet higher standards.[147]

The need for Swedish in Finland has also been studied. One reason for this need is the proximity of Finland to Sweden, as well as the historical ties and present relations with Sweden. According to Laitinen, the need for Swedish created by the rights of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland has already reached its culmination; from now on it will remain relatively steady or decrease slowly. Instead, the need for Swedish created by Nordic relations will increase in the future.[148]

According to the study, Finnish companies need Swedish as follows (in percentages):[149]

not at all	a little	somewhat	quite a lot	very much	total
10.3	26.9	30.5	18.0	14.3	100

Only 10.3 per cent of the companies under this survey do not need any Swedish at all. It also appears from the survey that more Swedish is needed at the lower levels of proficiency; for instance in service jobs the emphasis is on satisfactory spoken and written Swedish-language skills. As a whole, quality requirements in Swedish are high, and more people need Swedish than other languages.[150]

The need for Swedish inside the country is created by the bilingual status of the country and the language legislation. Because the Swedish-speaking population has been guaranteed the right to use Swedish in official matters, the civil service is expected to master both official lan-

guages. Balanced bilingualism is not required, however, but the required language skills depend on the degree of the person and the linguistic status of the area. It also affects the need for Swedish that there are several completely Swedish institutions in Finland to satisfy the requirements of the Swedish-speaking population, for instance within education, church, and army. In this respect there is a Swedish society within the Finnish, and in many important areas both language groups manage in their own languages.

Outside Finland Swedish is needed in Nordic relations. In addition to Sweden, Finland has lively relations with the other Scandinavian countries in various areas of social, economic, and cultural life.

As regards the official languages, Finland and Canada are in a different position. Canada is very fortunate to have two international languages as the official languages of the country. In Canada French is a natural second language; in Finland, many more language skills are required.

432. Swedish in the Comprehensive-School System Today

There are Finnish and Swedish schools in Finland, and Swedish is taught in all of them: as a mother tongue in the Swedish school system and as a traditional foreign language in the Finnish school system.

In Finnish schools foreign-language teaching starts at the grade 3 level. In most communities children are given the opportunity to study Swedish or English as their second language. Some large communities offer a wider selection of languages: French, German or Russian in addition to Swedish and English. However, all of these languages are available in a few large communities, and English is the only language that is available to all children. Today about 7 per cent of the pupils choose Swedish as their second language. These pupils study Swedish two forty-five-minute periods weekly in grades 3 to 7, and three periods weekly in grades 8 and 9. The rest of the children study Swedish in grades 7 to 9, three forty-five-minute periods weekly.[151] (See Appendix 3 and Appendix 4: The Finnish Comprehensive-School System, Curriculum)

In the school year 1984/1985 the outset of the foreign-language program will be postponed to the grade 4 level. This will partly be done

because of discouraging outcomes — the time devoted to the second language is very limited — partly because of the desire to give the children an opportunity to develop their mother tongue.[152]

In 1979 approximately 34,000 children studied Swedish as a mother tongue in Swedish schools.[153] Approximately 78 per cent of the children can be defined as Swedish-speaking and 22 per cent as bilingual, out of which 4 per cent come from unilingual Finnish homes.[154]

433. Is The Need Satisfied?

Finnish-speaking children get their basic Swedish-language skills in comprehensive schools, and language teaching continues at the high-school level and in connection with vocational training. Swedish can also be studied at the university level, and there are extensive adult-education systems which include language courses. There are plenty of opportunities to study Swedish in Finland. The time devoted to Swedish at the comprehensive-school level is very limited, however: two forty-five-minute periods weekly in grades 3 to 7 and three periods weekly in grades 8 and 9, or three periods a week in grades 7 to 9 if Swedish is the pupil's third language. This compares unfavourably with the Canadian twenty minutes daily. The Canadian standard is only ten minutes more weekly, but it gains in intensity: the children get their dose of French on a daily basis. More time is devoted to the second language in the Core Program in New Brunswick: fifty minutes daily starting at the grade 4 level, which is meant to provide the language skills required to "satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements".[155]

The Language Program Committee is not happy with the present language teaching situation in Finland. Two weekly forty-five-minute periods of language teaching for five years is not regarded as an appropriate solution. It seems that four approximately twenty-minute periods would produce better results. In the report, attention is also paid to the problems created by short teaching periods, especially when the language is taught by a specialist language teacher, not the class teacher.[156]

Is this enough to produce the desired level of bilingualism? "Definitely not", is the answer given by Pirkko Ruotsalainen, Head of The Nordic

Language and Information Center (Nordiska språk- och informationscentret). High-level language skills are required in Nordic relations, particularly in business and negotiations. Enough bilingual persons are not available, which creates pressures in adult education; language courses are crowded.[157]

According to Laitinen, the language skills of the personnel under survey satisfy the needs as follows (in percentages):[158]

very poorly	poorly	somewhat	quite well	very well	total
11.2	17.3	28.3	30.8	13.4	100

According to the survey, only 13.4 per cent of the personnel was able to satisfy the need very well whereas 44.2 per cent could be included in the upper category of quite well to well. The need was satisfied very poorly by 11.2 per cent of those under survey, and the performance of 28.5 per cent was regarded as very poor to poor.

44. Planning for Immersion in Finland: Areas to Be Considered

441. Attitudes

Attitudes are very powerful and they are slow to change. In Finland, both language groups have fought for their rights. Education in the child's mother tongue is regarded as a basic human right, as a basis of linguistic, intellectual, and social development. This feeling has been strengthened by the problems experienced by the children of Finnish immigrants to Sweden, which have been widely published in the press.[159] The situations are not similar: Finnish children in Sweden are a minority group with a low-status home language; nevertheless, their problems have dominated the discussion about bilingual education in Finland.

The myth of the mother tongue also appears in the report given by the Language Program Committee. The child would have more time to develop his basic aptitudes, primarily that for the mother tongue, if the outset of foreign-language teaching were postponed to grade 4 or grade 5.[160] The importance of the mother tongue as a basis of cognitive development is also stressed by the present bilingual schools in Finland, above all by The

Finnish-Russian School where all instruction through Russian starts gradually, together with the pupils' level of understanding. The Helsinki German School accepts Finnish-speaking children with required German skills into the German program, and the remaining schools start instruction through the foreign language at the grade 1 level. Nevertheless, instruction in Finnish is incorporated in the curricula of all Finnish bilingual schools.

According to Pirkko Ruotsalainen, Swedish-Finnish bilingual education has not been requested by parents.[161] This may be because of the attitude: it is the general opinion that a child should be educated in one language. It may also be that Finnish parents have got used to accepting what they are given by school authorities. In Finland, parents are less involved in school activities. Finnish mothers hear from the school nurse when their children should be vaccinated and read in newspapers what their children have for lunch; in Canada these matters are taken care of by the mothers, who also buy the scribblers at the beginning of the school year and have the opportunity of attending Home and School meetings and frequent teacher-parent interviews. New language programs are unlikely to be initiated by parents in Finland. There is no doubt need for bilingual programs. The enrollment into Swedish-speaking schools went up in Uusimaa in the school year 1981/1982, which can hardly be explained in any other way than that more bilingual families have chosen a Swedish school. It is a sign of a positive attitude toward bilingualism.[162]

Further positive attitudes toward Swedish-Finnish bilingual education can be found. Tove Skutnabb, a Scandinavian researcher of bilingualism, feels that Swedish kindergartens and schools should stop accepting Finnish-speaking children; they should not be taught together with Swedish-speaking children. This would give the Swedish-speaking children better chances to develop their mother tongue, which is under a threat in a Finnish environment. Finnish-speaking parents should be offered opportunities to enroll their children into classes where instruction would be given exclusively in Swedish, but where all classmates would be Finnish-speaking and the teacher bilingual. Bilingual families should give support to the minority language: Finnish in predominantly Swedish communities and Swedish in predominantly Finnish communities. The idea is not her own; she refers to the Canadian immersion model.[163] — Other researchers

have paid attention to the problems created by the co-education of children with varying Swedish skills in the Swedish schools of Finland. Should these children be referred to Finnish schools under certain circumstances? Should they be given instruction in Finnish as a mother tongue and in Swedish as a second language?[164]

Another radical suggestion is made by Pirkko Anttila, Office Manager at The National Board of Education. She asks why for instance handicrafts could not be taught in Swedish. She is not speaking about language teaching; she would in general like to bring theory and practice closer together.[165] Her suggestion would result in a Second Language plus Content Subject program.

The Language Program Committee pays attention to the fact that there are no schools in Finland which would use both Finnish and Swedish as the languages of instruction. They see such education as desirable and recommend further study on the subject. The schools could be predominantly Finnish-Swedish, with more emphasis on Finnish at the early grade levels. They would satisfy the need of the Finnish-speaking population to learn Swedish more effectively. Swedish-Finnish schools, with more emphasis on Swedish at the beginning, could also be considered.[166] The Committee also finds the Canadian research on French immersion interesting, but concludes by saying that similar programs would be difficult to adapt to the administrative system of Finland.[167] The question of bilingual education has also been brought up from time to time at the ministerial level, but concrete results are lacking to date.[168]

442. Legislation

The subjects to be taught in comprehensive schools as well as the teaching periods devoted to each are regulated by law in Finland, but special permission to depart from the legal regulations can be granted by the Ministry of Education for experimental purposes. A program like immersion education can only be introduced to Finnish schools on an experimental basis. Reijo Laukkanen, Chief Inspector at the Experimenting and Research Bureau of the National Board of Education, cannot see why this

would not be possible. An experiment like Swedish-Finnish bilingual education would draw a lot of attention, and would certainly require special permission, however.[169]

The Community Council may address an application for such a special permission to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education may grant the requested permission, if deemed advisable, on the basis of the experimental program, which must be accepted by the National Board of Education. Before being presented to the Ministry of Education, the application is also dealt with by the authorities of the administrative district in question. The negative consequences which the experiment might have will be especially carefully considered.[170] In this case it would presumably be accepted that Swedish would benefit, but the eventual adverse effects on mother tongue development and academic achievement, as well as psychological and practical implications would be very carefully considered.

All experiments must be implemented in accordance with the instructions given by the National Board of Education. This implies that the teachers in question must participate in in-service training workshops arranged by the Board, and the community is under an obligation to report to the Board on all stages of the experiment.[171] Should an experiment prove successful, amendments to the laws in question could be made through legislative action. It seems possible to implement an immersion program in Finland, but there is a lot of paper work and bureaucracy involved.

443. Practical Considerations

Finland and Canada present some important similarities as regards immersion education. Both are countries with two official languages, one of them in the minority. There are differences also, which must be considered. In Canada, children start school at the age of six, and possibly kindergarten at the age of five. This does not mean that they were more developed than Finnish children; the academic content of the primary grades is relatively lean. Nevertheless, in immersion classes they have the opportunity to learn French and develop their basic skills of reading,

writing, and arithmetic through French one to two years before the age our children start school. They have acquired sufficient working skills in French by the time they need the language at a more sophisticated level. According to the research evidence accumulated in Canada this has succeeded very well.

From a mother's perspective, Canadian and Finnish schools are very different.[172] In Canada they have hardly any books during the primary grades; my children brought home a story book, their reader, once or twice. They also had a math book, but they only brought home the pages which they had completed in school. Other materials consisted of scribblers, crayons, scissors, glue, and blueprints. The children concentrated on the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but they did not have any reading material for subjects like health or social studies; they completed their scribblers themselves. They had very little homework, and it consisted of cutting out pictures from catalogues for their scribblers, and learning how to spell a given list of words. They had no tests except the weekly spelling test. (See Appendix 10: Canadian Spelling Test) In Finland, children are expected to read and memorize much more; in Canada, the emphasis is on activity. (See Appendix 11 and Appendix 12: Finnish and Canadian Health Material, Grade 1) Because of these differences, it would be unreasonable to expect that a Canadian immersion program would automatically produce similar results, if imported to Finland.

Planning a curriculum for immersion classes causes some problems. With more emphasis on languages during the given hours all other subjects could not be given the same attention as in other classes, unless Finnish was completely deleted. Instruction in some subjects, such as environmental studies, could perhaps be incorporated into language teaching. This requires a lot of planning. A decision should also be made whether to implement the immersion program at the grade 1 level or later, supported by a few years of Swedish as a traditional second language. In grades 1 to 6 the children are mainly taught by a class teacher, except in a few subjects such as foreign languages, handicrafts, music, and perhaps physical education. Introducing an immersion program at this level would require fewer practical arrangements. At the higher grade levels the pupils are taught by specialist teachers, and they have several elective subjects in addition to different language groups, which might create problems in the Finnish context.

Finding suitable materials and bilingual teachers should not constitute a major problem in Finland. We have both school systems already: there are bilingual teachers as well as Finnish and Swedish teaching materials. When the Language Program Committee recommends the establishment of bilingual schools in Finland, it also states that finding bilingual teachers and materials would not be difficult.[171] A large-scale implementation would create problems for Finnish-speaking teachers, but as only approximately 7 per cent of Finnish-speaking children choose Swedish as their second language at present, and there is a lot of need for other languages in Finland, it would hardly become a major problem.

5. CONCLUSIONS

French immersion was introduced in Canada over twenty years ago in search of more effective language-teaching methods. It started from numerous pilot projects in Quebec and Ontario, in most cases initiated by parental pressure, and has during the past years spread all over Canada. Instead of grammatical rules, the emphasis is on communication; the teaching method is simply to teach about the subject content using French. The program has proved very effective. As could be expected, the immersion pupils have achieved much better results in French than those following a traditional language-teaching program, even though they cannot be defined as balanced bilinguals. What is more surprising is that their mother-tongue development and academic achievement have not suffered. It appears that a lot of learning has occurred independent of language.

The Canadian immersion education has some unique characteristics. The participating children belong to the dominating English-speaking majority of the country, and they enter the program with the objective of learning French, the second official language. It is typical of the program that English-speaking children are not taught together with French-speaking children. They enter the program with equal language skills, and therefore also with equal opportunities of success in school. The teachers are bilingual in French and English, which guarantees communication, even if they do not use English in class. French immersion is open to all children, but the option of regular English education is always available to

those who prefer it. In spite of these common characteristics, all immersion programs are not similar. Early immersion starts in kindergarten or at the grade 1 level and late immersion in grade 7 or 8. Late immersion pupils have normally followed a traditional second-language program for at least a year. In case of total immersion even English is deleted, but it is always incorporated into the curriculum at a later grade level — the children do not learn French at the expense of English.

Finland is also a country with two official languages, but bilingual education in Finnish and Swedish is not offered to Finnish children: they must choose either the Finnish or the Swedish stream. This has resulted in co-education of children with varying Swedish skills in the Swedish schools of Finland, which creates problems for both language groups. Nevertheless, there are four bilingual schools in Helsinki: The Helsinki German School, The English School, The Finnish–Russian School, and The Helsinki French–Finnish School. All of these foreign-language schools use both languages for instruction, but otherwise their methods differ. Some start with more emphasis on the foreign language, others with more emphasis on Finnish. Finnish is not totally deleted in any of the schools, except at the kindergarten level.

Finland shares some important characteristics with Canada. They are both countries with two official languages; the language rights of the minority group are guaranteed by the Constitution. One of the languages is dominating and the other one is in the minority: approximately 25.7 per cent of Canadians speak French as a mother tongue, whereas 6.3 per cent of Finns speak Swedish as a mother tongue. There are regional variations in both countries: a great majority of the Swedish-speaking population of Finland is living in Åland and in the coastal regions of the mainland, whereas in Canada a major French-speaking population outside Quebec and the Atlantic provinces can only be found in Manitoba. There are also differences. Swedish is needed in Finland to protect the rights of the Swedish-speaking population and it is needed in Nordic relations, but there are many other languages which we need outside Scandinavia, above all English, German, French, and Russian. All these languages are taught in Finnish comprehensive schools. Canada is very lucky to have two international languages as the official languages of the country: all language-teaching efforts can be concentrated on French in Canadian schools. The

administrative system of Finland is relatively inelastic: the subjects to be taught in the comprehensive-school system as well as the hours devoted to each are prescribed by law. Even initiating an experimental project requires a lot of paper work at various levels of the bureaucracy. In addition, the importance of the mother tongue has been stressed in Finland as a basis of all linguistic, intellectual, and psychological development, partly due to the problems experienced by Finnish immigrants to Sweden, who live in a totally different situation.

Is there an optimum age for language learning? It has been argued that young children acquire languages directly, much in the same way as they learn their mother tongue, whereas older learners interpose the speech units of their mother tongue. It has also been argued that older children learn languages more efficiently, at least in a school context, due to their cognitive maturity. It appears that young children should be offered ample opportunity to hear and use the target language in real communicative situations to gain the advantages of age. Two forty-five-minute periods weekly in grades 3 to 7, as presently offered in the comprehensive schools of Finland, does not seem an appropriate solution.

Immersion education is a combination of an intensive language program and a regular school program: content subjects are taught in the target language. Early total immersion is the most ambitious of these programs. It offers the children a lot of opportunity to develop a wide range of interpersonal communicative skills before they become aware of a conscious effort. They learn the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic in the second language, and the emphasis on the second language is during the early years of schooling, when the academic content is relatively lean. Early partial immersion pupils have not achieved equally well in Canada. In the present Finnish context, early total immersion is hardly thinkable. This is because of the administrative system and the attitudes — the importance given to the mother tongue as a basis of personality development. However, there is desire and need for bilingualism in Finland. Partial immersion classes following the Canadian model — and also that of The French-Finnish School — would be feasible. An experimental project could possibly be initiated in one of the bilingual communities. Offering this type of education would be one way to solve the problems now experienced by Swedish schools.

Canadian late immersion pupils have achieved good language skills in a more limited time, which may be due to their cognitive maturity. The only area where early immersion pupils consistently show superiority is listening comprehension. Late immersion classes could create more serious administrative problems in the Finnish context, however. As Swedish is not the only language chosen by the pupils, there are several language groups in most schools. From grade 8 on, several elective subjects are incorporated into the curriculum, which further increases the number of different groups. In addition, at this level all subjects are taught by specialist teachers, which would make the situation even more complex. It could create an overwhelming problem to start teaching most content subjects in Swedish at this level to those pupils who have chosen Swedish as their second language. Second Language plus Content Subject — for instance teaching handicrafts in Swedish — would be better than nothing, if such a program could be implemented. It would give the pupils an opportunity to practice their language skills, even if in a limited context.

A bilingual school would offer a very good opportunity to become bilingual, but only to the children of one or two large communities. The idea of such a school is not too radical: there are four bilingual foreign-language schools in Finland already. A bilingual school in Swedish and Finnish is in fact lacking. There are bilingual teachers in Finland, and teaching materials are also readily available. A bilingual school seems like a realistic alternative in the Finnish context. The Canadian experience shows that children learn and develop under favourable circumstances independent of the language of instruction. Both early and late immersion programs have proven successful, but partial immersion programs have not shown any gains over total immersion programs. Whatever the program is, it needs to be carefully planned. Very few generalizations seem to be possible about bilingual education. It is essentially a community problem.

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96. Stanutz, 150.
97. Reid and LeBlanc, interview.
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99. Reid and LeBlanc, interview.
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101. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Berichi über das Schuljahr 1977-1978* (Helsinki, 1978), front cover.
102. Arja Aalto, interview, March, 1984.
103. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Berichi über das Schuljahr 1977-1978*, p. 21.
104. Idem, p. 5.
105. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Jahresberichi 1982/83* (Helsinki, 1983), pp. 65-82.
106. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Berichi über das Schuljahr 1977-1978*, p. 23.
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108. Idem, p. 82.
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110. Idem, p. 5.
111. Sister Renée Brinker, interview, March, 1984.
112. Ibid.
113. *The English School 1982-1983*, pp. 36-37.
114. Brinker, interview.

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115. *The English School 1982–1984*, p. 39.
116. *Suomalais-venalainen koulu 1982–1983* (Helsinki, 1983), front cover.
117. Idem, pp. 29–30.
and Martti Ruohonen, interview, March, 1984.
118. Ruohonen, interview.
119. *Suomalais-venalainen koulu 1980–81* (Helsinki, 1981), pp. 30–33.
120. *Suomalais-venalainen koulu 1982–83*, p. 24.
121. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietinto*, p. 25.
122. Jarmo Anttila, interview, March, 1984.
123. *Helsingin ranskalais-suomalainen koulu 1982–1983* (Helsinki, 1983), pp. 9–11.
124. Anttila, interview.
125. Ibid.
126. Aalto, interview.
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128. "Kansainvalisen koulun valittomyys hellyttaa", Helsingin Sanomat, December 24, 1983, 7.
129. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Bericht uber das Schuljahr 1979–1980*, p. 72.
130.

l	=laudatur	6 points	(superior achievement)
m	=magna cum laude	5 points	(above average)
c	=cum laude	4 points	(average)
b	=lubentur approbatur	3 points	"
a	=approbatur	2 points	(below average)
i	=improbatur		(below requirements)

131. Ruohonen, interview; material received from the school office.
132. *Helsingin ranskalais-suomalainen koulu 1978–1979* (Helsinki, 1979), p. 16.
133. Folke Nyberg, "Svenskt i Finland under århundraden," *Boken om Svenskfinland*, ed. Annika Schmedes (Esbo, 1982b), pp. 19–45.
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136. Nyberg, 1982a, pp. 55–56.
137. *Finlandssvensk rapport nr 2: En statistisk rapport om finlandssvenskarna – var står vi idag?* (Helsingfors, 1981), p. 9.
138. Swain, 1981a, 1.
139. Lambert, 114.
140. "Siirtolaisia kohtaan vaadittiin ymmarrysta: Kielirinta hautasi muut ongelmat Tukholmassa," Turun Sanomat, February 29, 1984, 3.
141. Lambert, 114–115.
142. Swain, 1981b, 11.
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145. Idem, 3–4.
146. Swain, 1981a, 6–7.
147. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietintö*, pp. 72–83.
148. Arja Laitinen, *Ruotsinkielen tarve Suomessa* (Turku, 1972), pp. 94–96.
149. Laitinen, p. 53.
150. Idem, pp. 97–98.
151. Pirkko Ruotsalainen, interview, March, 1984.
152. Ibid.
153. *Finlandssvensk rapport nr 2: En statistisk rapport om finlandssvenskarna – var står vi idag?*, p. 34.
154. Viking Brunell, *Dialekt, tvåspråkighet och modersmålsundervisning i den finlandssvenska grundskolan* (Jyväskylä, 1983), pp. I–II.
155. *An overview of Second Language Programs*, brochure issued by New Brunswick School District No. 15, Spring 1979.
156. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietintö*, p. 141.
157. Ruotsalainen, interview.
158. Laitinen, p. 54.
159. For instance: "Puolikielinen siirtolaispolvi," Helsingin Sanomat, April 22, 1979, 25.
160. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietintö*, p. 166.
161. Ruotsalainen, interview.
162. Christian Mehlem, "Nyland — väger tyngst," *Boken om Svenskfinland*, p. 67.
163. "Med två språk ser man världen ur minst två olika synvinklar," Hufvudstadsbladet, November 18, 1983, 22.
164. Brunell, p. 6.
165. "Lapsi tarvitsee onnistumisen elämyksiä," Kotiliesi, 16, 1983, 49.
166. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietintö*, p. 183.
167. Idem, p. 141.
168. Ruotsalainen, interview.
169. Reijo Laukkanen, interview, April, 1984.
170. Ibid.
171. Ibid.
172. Based on the writer's experience of Pointe du Chêne School and Shediac Cape School in School District No. 15, New Brunswick, Canada, and Hepokullan koulu and Puolalan koulu in Turku, Finland.
173. *Kieliohjelmakomitean mietintö*, p. 183.

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Appendix I

FINNISH AND CANADIAN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

	New Brunswick School System in Canada[1]		Finnish School System[2]		The English School in Helsinki[3,4]	
Approx. age	Grade		Grade		Grade	
18						
17	12	Senior	3	High		
16	11	High	Vocational training 2	School		
15	10		1			
14	9	Junior	9		5	
13	8	High	8	Higher	4	
12	7		7	Grade Levels	3	Intermediate
11	6		6		2	
10	5	Intermediate	5		1	
9	4		4	Lower	4	
8	3		3	Grade Levels	3	Preparatory
7	2	Primary	2		2	
6	1		1		1	
5					Primary Kindergarten	

1. In some Canadian provinces kindergarten is part of the school system, as well as grade 13.
2. Pre-school is not part of the Finnish school system, but most foreign-language schools in Finland have kindergarten classes or grade 0.
3. *The English School 1982-1983*, p. 5.
4. The system of The English School differs from the Finnish school system; therefore they are treated separately here.

Appendix 2

School District No. 15, Moncton, New Brunswick Curriculum: Grades 1 to 9, 5-day plan[1]

Elementary School[2]

	Primary (Grades 1 and 2)		Intermediate (Grades 3 to 6)	
	Minutes	%	*Minutes*	%
Language Arts	400	33	425	28
Mathematics	300	25	300	20
Social Studies	80	6	150	10
French			150	10
Science	60	5	100	6
Physical Education	100	8	100	6
Health	60	5	75	5
Art	100	8	100	6
Music	100	8	100	6

Junior High School[3]

	Grade 7	*Grade 8*	*Grade 9*
Language Arts	9	7	7
Mathematics	7	6	6
Social Studies	4	4	4
Science	4	4	4
Health	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2
Home Economics/Industrial Arts	—	3	3
French	5	5	5
Art and/or Music	2	2	2

1. Cheryl C. Reid, interview, April, 1984.
2. The elementary day is not divided into a certain number of periods each of which is of the same duration.
3. This is based on a 35 period week; each period being 45 minutes in length.

The Finnish Comprehensive-School System
Curriculum: Grades 1 to 6, 5-day plan[1]

Subject	Grade 1	2	3	4	5	6
Religion	2	2	2	2	1	1
Primary Language	8	8	5	5	5	5
Second Language[3]	—	—	2	2	2	2
History					2	2
Orientation	3	2	1	1	1	1
Civics						
Mathematics	3	4	4	4	4	4
Environmental studies						
Natural History and Geography			3	3	3	3
Physical Education	3	3	3	3	3	3
Music			3	3	3	3
Art	1	1				
Handicrafts	1	1	2	2	2	2
Total	21	21	25	25	26	26
Elective Language[2]					2	2
					28	28

Class periods: 45 minutes
Intermissions: 15 minutes

1. *Den finska skolan 1983: Information om finsk- och svenskspråkig undervisning* (Stockholm, 1984), p. 20.
2. Applies to Swedish schools only (English or Finnish).
3. In Finnish Schools: English, Swedish, French, German or Russian. In Swedish Schools Finnish or English.

Appendix 4

The Finnish Comprehensive-School System
Curriculum: Grades 7 to 9, 5-day plan[1]

Subjects	Grade 7	8	9
Religion	1	1	1
Primary Language	3	3	3
Second Language	2	3	3
Third Language[2]	3	3	3
History	2	2	2
Civics	1	1	—
Mathematics	3	3	4
Orientation	1	1	1
Physics and Chemistry	2	2	3
Natural History and Geography	2	2	3
Physical Education	2	2	2
Music	1	1	1
Art	1	2	
Handicrafts	3	—	—
Home Economics	3	—	—
Total	30	26	26
Elective	7	8	9
Technical work		2/4	2/4
Textile work		2/4	2/4
Home Economics		2	2
Farming, Forestry and Gardening		2	2
Commercial Education		2	2
Typing		2	2
Fourth Language[3]		2	2
Total weekly periods	30	30	30

1. *Den finska skolan 1983: Information om finsk- och svenskspråkig undervisning* (Stockholm, 1984), p. 21.
2. Finnish schools: Swedish or English (Elective Latin)
   Swedish schools: Finnish or English (Elective Latin)
3. Finnish schools: French, German, Russian or English
   Swedish schools: French, German or Russian

Appendix 5

The Helsinki German School

Curriculum (Bilingual Program): Grades 3 to 9, 5-day plan[1]

Grades	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Subjects							
German	7	7	7	7	5	5	5
English						4	4
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
Physics						2	2
Chemistry							1
Biology			2	2	1	1	1
Environmental Studies	2	2					
Geography			2	2	2	2	2
History			2	2	2	2	2
Religion	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
Art	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
Music	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Handicrafts (technical or textile)			1	1	1		
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	4	3	2
Finnish students:							
Primary Language	7	7	4	4	3	3	3
Second Official Language					4	4	3

1. *Deutsche Schule Helsinki: Jahresbericht 1982/83*, p. 83.

Appendix 6a

The English School: Curriculum[1]

PREPARATORY CURRICULUM — 10-DAY PLAN

Class	1	2	3	4
Subject:				
Religion F/E	3	3	3	3
English Reading	8	6	6	5
Language-English	4	6	6	5
Finnish	14	14	14	14
Study of Environment F/E		2	2	
Geography F/E			2	6F
Nature Study E				2
Arithmetic F/E	6	6	8	8F
Drawing F/E	2	2	2	2
Handwork F/E		2	3	3
Music F/E	2	2	2	2
Gymnastics F/E	3	3	6	6
Total	42	46	54	56

Class periods: 45 minutes
Intermissions: 15 minutes
F/E=Language of instruction, Finnish and English

Appendix 6b

INTERMEDIATE CURRICULUM — 10-DAY PLAN

Class	1	2	3	4	5
Subject: Religion F/E	3	3	3	3	2
English	8	8	10	10	9
Finnish F	7	7	7	7	6
Swedish F	5	5	5	5	5
German F (Elective) 1				5	5
French F (Elective)				5	5
History	2F	5E	5E	5E	5F
Geography	3E	3E	3E	3E	3F
General Science E	3	4			
Biology E			4	4	4
Chemistry F/E			4	5	
Physics F/E					5
Mathematics F/E	7	7	7	7	9
Health and Gym	6	6	4	5	5
Art E	4	3	4	3	3
Music F/E	3	3			
Handwork F/E	3	4	3		
Vocational Guidance F					2
Total	54	58	59	62	62

1 A choice of either German or French.
Class periods: 45 minutes
Intermission: 10 minutes
E=Language of Instruction, English F=Language of Instruction, Finnish.
F/E=Language of Instruction, Finnish and English

1. *The English School 1982–1983*, pp. 36–37.

The Finnish-Russian School
Curriculum: Grades 1 to 9, 5-day plan[1]

Subject / Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Religion or Ethics	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	11
Primary Language[2]	9	8	7	7	7	7	4	4	4	57
Russian	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	39
Swedish							3	3	3	9
History and Civics					2	2	2	2	2	10
Mathematics	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	30
Physics / Chemistry							2	2	3	7
Natural History / Geography / Physical Education	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	16
Music / Art (optional in grade 9)			2	3	2	2	1 1	1 1	1 1	16
Handicrafts	1	1	2	1	1	1	2			9
Home Economics							3			3
Total	21	21	25	25	27	27	30	26	26	
Elective										
English					1	1	1	2	2	7
Handicrafts (technical and textile)								2 or 4	2 or 4	4 or 8
Home Economics								2	2	4
Commercial Education								2	2	4
Typing								2	2	4
French or German								2	2	4

1. *Suomalais-venäläinen koulu 1982–1983*. p. 25
2. Study of Surrounding and Health are taught in connection with Primary Language.

Appendix 8

The Helsinki French-Finnish School

Curriculum: Grades 1 to 6, 5-day plan[1]

Grades	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Subjects							
Religion	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Environmental Studies	2	2	1	1			6
Primary Language	8	8	6	6	5	5	38
French	4	4	6	6	6	6	32
History and Civics					2	2	4
Mathematics	3	4	3	3	4	4	21
Natural History and Geography			3	3	3	3	12
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	3	3	14
Music			3	3	2	2	12
Art	1	1					
Total	21	22	25	25	26	26	145
Elective							
English					3	3	6
Orientation			1	1			2

Religion and Primary Language are taught in Finnish. French and Environmental Studies are taught in French. The remaining subjects may be taught in French or Finnish or partly through either of them, the amount of instruction through French being at least two-thirds of the total hours of instruction at the pre-school level and in grades 1 to 4, however.

1. *Helsingin ranskalais-suomalainen koulu 1982-1983*, p. 9.

Appendix 9

The Helsinki French-Finnish School

Curriculum: Grades 7 to 9, 5-day plan[1]

Grades	7	8	9	Total
Subjects				
Religion	1	1	1	3
Primary Language	3	3	3	9
French	5	5	5	15
Swedish	3	3	3	9
History and Civics	2	3	2	7
Mathematics	3	3	4	10
Physics and Chemistry	2	2	3	7
Natural History and Geography	2	2	2	6
Physical Education	2	2	2	6
Music	1	1	1*	3
Art	1	1	1*	3
Home Economics	3			3
Total	28	26	26	80
Elective				
Handicrafts (technical or textile)		2	2	4
Home Economics		2	2	4
Commercial Education				
Typing	2	2	2	6
English	2	2	2	6
Orientation	1	1	1	3
Total	31	32	32	

* Art and Music are optional subjects in grade 9.

Religion, Primary Language and History are taught through Finnish.
French Language is taught through French.

The remaining subjects may be taught through French or Finnish or partly through either of them. Instruction through French must be at least one-fifth of the minimum total hours of instruction in grades 5 to 9 and at the high-school level. Foreign languages, primarily taught through the language in question, are included in the subjects taught through Finnish.

1. *Helsingin ranskalais-suomalainen koulu 1982–1983*, p. 10.

Appendix 10

Canadian Spelling Test[1]

1. Written by Laura Helle in grade 2 at Pointe-du-Chêne School, New Brunswick, in school year 1978/1979.

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Appendix 11

A Canadian Health Lesson: "Keep clean"[1]

1. Drawn and written by Tuomas Helle in grade 1 at Point-du-Chêne School, New Brunswick, in school year 1980/1981.

Appendix 12

A Finnish Health Lesson: Reading Material[1]

HOI-DAN HAM-PAI-TA-NI

HAR-JA-US AA-MUIN JA IL-LOIN.

1. Kaarina Laine ja Maija Hautera, *Tutkimme ympäristöamme I*, syyskirja (Helsinki, 1981), p. 95.

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91 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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